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**TRANSFORMING LEADERSHIP: A CASE STUDY OF THE DYNAMIC NATURE OF
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT**

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Chapter 1 The research aim and chapter summaries

Abstract

The aim of this research has been to analyse school leadership processes during a period of significant change and development. The methodologies used were characterised by a naturalistic and interpretive forms of enquiry as I sought to determine the way in which the individual responded to, modified and interpreted the environment to which they belonged. The three research design elements of semi-structured interviews, questionnaire-based survey and documentation analysis allowed trustworthy detailed descriptions and analysis of the context and emerging leadership to be recorded. The purpose of the research was to provide an understanding of school leadership grounded in practice, underpinned by the various theoretical leadership constructs that drew on established leadership theories, in order to give new perspectives and insights and suggesting further avenues for research and development.

The research points to the central importance of capacity and competency building in response to the changing aspirations and vision of the school. Further, it has been argued that the degree of competency and capacity development has a direct bearing on the style of leadership exercised. In particular, attention is drawn to the dynamic and fluid nature of leadership processes that are context and needs driven. Comparisons between the static model of leadership advocated in research literature with the dynamic and responsive leadership advocated through this research is made.

The normative theoretical constructs associated with transformational leadership are used to describe the various leadership actions as they change over time in the case study school. A case is made for asserting that whilst transformational leadership constructs are

useful for describing actions once they have occurred, they are limited in their usefulness as planning tools, since leadership practices are an inherent product of the culture and setting in which they operate.

The transforming leadership model is introduced to represent the dynamic and changing nature of leadership. Within the transforming leadership model the concepts of transformational cycles, competency deficit, critical mass dynamic and delimited distributed leadership are introduced. The transforming leadership model has the potential to provide educational leaders with a framework on which to base leadership actions in a way that reflects the dynamic context of educational leadership, and with which to understand and analyse their leadership actions.

Introduction

The importance of leadership in creating and maintaining effective schools is being given increasing prominence in research, policy and practice (Crawford et al, 1997). Whilst there are differences in the interpretation of what is meant by 'leadership' and 'effectiveness', there is a consensus of research and opinion that point to the interdependence of the two in improving pupil achievement, a finding confirmed by James and Connolly (2000) through their research into effective change and improvement in schools:

"While a number of themes emerged from the data, a key determinant, if not the key factor in accelerating performance of schools, appeared to be the quality of the leadership in the schools". p140

The connection between school performance and quality of leadership has however been questioned by Hallinger and Heck (1996). In the development of the 'black box'

concept of leadership, Hallinger and Heck assert that whilst relationships may be empirically tested, the findings reveal little of how leadership operates. This assertion is challenged by Andrews and Crowther (2002) who suggest teacher leadership and the quality of leadership of schools are inexorably intertwined, further asserting that teacher leadership development does not flourish independently of the principalship (p154). They write:

“School wide, professional learning, as we have observed it in schools that have managed processes of reform with substantial success, has invariably involved principals and teachers in joint professional development activities”.
p155

Research aim

The aim of this research is to analyse school leadership processes during a period of significant change and development. The purpose of the research is to provide an understanding of school leadership grounded in practice, that draws on established leadership theories, in order to give new perspectives and insights and suggesting further avenues for research and development in school leadership.

A substantive share of the research associated with school leadership focuses on the theoretical understanding of leadership, rather than on the practicalities of day-to-day management and leadership of change (Richmon and Allison, 2003). The shortfall between theory and practice undermines the confidence of practitioners to apply theory into practice since espoused theories seem far removed from the every day practicalities of running a school with which they are familiar. Fullan (2001) writes,

“An understanding of what reality is from the point of view of people within the role is an essential starting point for constructing a practical theory of the meaning and results of change attempts”. p137

It is important therefore, in researching leadership and the management of change, to incorporate the reflections of those in positions of leadership within schools since this can bring to the research opportunities to develop theories grounded in every day practice.

“The interplay between leadership and the initial conditions, the initiation of change, the institution’s change capability and the purpose of change, all play a part in the change process”. (James and Connolly, 2000, p141)

Traditional research methodologies used to study educational leadership pay insufficient attention to the role played by the institutional context in the social construction of leaders (Brandon, 2002) leading to decisions being distanced from the processes involved in developing them. There is a good case for arguing that for the most part, leadership research depends on the correlation analysis of a number of variables whilst overlooking, or not taking into consideration, the contextual situations that inevitably impinge on the style of leadership practiced (English, 1995). What is needed in leadership research is to understand the critical role that context plays in the construction of an individual’s leadership. This research attempts to show the linkage between the context of the case study school and the leadership construct that evolved as the culture changed through transforming processes.

“If the objective in leadership research is to understand and illuminate behaviour, only the use of data acquired from real settings/contexts will move the study of leadership beyond the presumptuousness of trying to ascertain what leaders do from reputational approaches”. (English, 1995, p204)

English (1995) suggests the need to research and collect data about leadership situations that portray actual examples of leader behaviour in varying contexts, allowing for a greater range of variables to be researched than through traditional leadership research methodology consisting largely of correlation analysis and limited

variables such as traits and attributes. The case study approach used in this research has enabled a broader and deeper perspective of leadership in action to be conceptualised, underpinned and supplemented by the theoretical models of leadership described in research literature on leadership; forging a link between theory and practice.

As James and Connolly (2000) succinctly indicate, the process of change is concerned with the interplay between the actors in the organisation and the school culture and its capabilities and the way in which the leadership manages these variables. Consequently, it is important for the research into leadership practices to analyse the interactions between the various players and the way in which styles of leadership evolve and develop to accommodate changing circumstances and demands. As the positional leader of the case study school it has been possible through reflective processes to bring to this research a first hand interpretation and account of the strategies, action plans, leadership and frameworks put in place during a period of significant and sustained change in the school.

This research draws on evidence from a case study school in which the development of transforming leadership is demonstrated and explores the pragmatic way in which this was achieved through the reflective account of the headteacher, supported through a range of verifiable data sets and highlighting the barriers to change and how these were overcome. Key issues at each stage of the transformational process are identified and analysed through the theoretical lens of leadership constructs. The research highlights the contrast between the static conceptualisation of leadership espoused through theoretical models with the fluid and dynamic model evidenced through the findings. A model of transforming leadership is introduced through transformational leadership cycles, critical mass dynamic, delimited distributed leadership and the concept of

competency deficit. The report concludes by summarising the key issues for effective transforming leadership in practice.

Chapter summaries

Chapter 2

In Chapter 2 a detailed overview of the context of the case study school is provided together with evidence to show how there have been substantive improvements in performance between 1997 and 2004. Using independent indicators, external to the school, improvements in performance are attributed to the value added by the school rather than to chance or changes in the ability range of the pupils attending the school. The chapter concludes by outlining the political backdrop to the school and its academic standing prior to 1998 through reference to the 1994 inspection report and abstracts from various contemporaneous memos, letters and press statements.

Chapter 3

The generic leadership construct of transformational leadership is explored through the literature review in Chapter 3, leading to the idea of the fluid and dynamic nature of transforming leadership that is responsive to the changing social and cultural contexts of organisations. The review highlights the main constructs that underpin transformational leadership, whilst making the point that leadership embraces a continuum of leadership styles determined by the competencies and capabilities of those being led and responsive to changing contextual constraints and needs. A conceptual model of leadership is introduced that embraces the theoretical leadership constructs outlined in the literature review whilst at the same time addresses the dynamic and changing nature of leadership in practice.

Chapter 4

The purposes of this research is to analyse the way in which the transforming leadership of a school developed, how the barriers to the strategies for change were overcome and to bridge the gap between theory and practice. The investigative tools used for data collection consisted of content analysis of documents, a questionnaire to 25 members of the teaching staff and semi-structured interviews with members of staff, pupils and governors and are described in Chapter 4. Limitations of, and the steps taken to eliminate, anomalous and ambiguous data are outlined together with the way in which methodological triangulation and validation of the data was achieved. The chapter lists the range of archive sources and contemporaneous documents used in the research together with the reasons for their inclusion.

Chapter 5

The narrative account in Chapter 5 describes in detail the leadership processes during a period of significant change and development in the case study school. The processes of creating the image of the school and changing expectations are described in Strand 1, covering policy infrastructure, documentation placed in the public domain, the moral framework and the monitoring and evaluation of practice. Strand 2 is concerned with developing staff competencies through a programme of professional development, effective data analysis, and collaborative practices. Strategic planning and development form the backbone of Strand 3 together with an analysis of how restructuring can assist the process of transforming leadership whilst in Strand 4 consideration is given to the concepts of empowerment and sustainability. The narrative concludes by investigating the barriers to change together with its associated micro-political dimension.

Chapter 6

The emerging themes arising from the narrative account are described in Chapter 6, interpreting them in the light of the literature, and explaining what this research has found is different. The thread running through the narrative in Chapters 5 is the continuum of leadership styles that embrace elements of instructional, transactional and transformational paradigms and the way in which leadership practices draw on elements of the various models according to the changing and evolving contextual parameters of the school. Chapter 6 explores through theoretical constructs the various strands of development of the case study school, leading to a conceptualisation of leadership in practice, which I am calling transforming leadership.

Chapter 7

The conceptualisation of leadership introduced in Chapter 6, is developed further in Chapter 7, into the transforming leadership model. The model is described in terms of a fluid and dynamic model of leadership, articulated through transformational cycles able to respond to the changing cultural dynamics and aspirations. The transforming leadership model calls into question the validity of the static model of transformational leadership implied through educational literature, training programmes and the inspection framework. The chapter also introduces the critical mass dynamic in which it is proposed that staff profiles play a significant role in determining the extent to which schools can be transformed and the competency deficit model to describe organisations unable to implement transformational practices because of a lack of appropriate competency and capacity development. How distributed leadership is developed is discussed and the concluding section summarises the key issues identified through this research project for effective transforming leadership to be achieved.

Chapter 2 The Case Study School

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the context of the case study school and evidence to show how there have been substantive and sustained improvements in performance between 1997 and 2004. Through analysis of prior attainment levels it is demonstrated that the value added by the school is significant. The chapter concludes by examining the wider political context in which the school operates and, in particular, how this influenced the management, leadership and attainment of the school prior to 1998.

Context of the Case Study School

The case study school is an 11-18 mixed comprehensive school within a Welsh Unitary Authority. There are 960 pupils on roll and overall there are slightly more boys than girls in the school, representing a significant increase in numbers since 1997, when there were 450 pupils on roll. The school serves an area of established housing in a former mining village, but also draws pupils from further a field. Following the reorganisation of school status in September 1999, the school now holds foundation status, having previously become a Grant Maintained school in September 1991. It has a sixth form, which was established in 1997 and now has approximately 150 pupils.

Approximately three quarters of the pupil intake is from four local primary schools; the other quarter is from schools beyond the immediate neighbourhood. Almost all pupils come from town and semi-rural areas, which are not unlike the village that the school serves. English is the first language of all the pupils with few from Welsh speaking

families or minority ethnic groups. Pupils entering the school represent the full range of ability with 140 on the special needs register and 24 pupils having statements of special educational need.

Standards of Attainment in the Case Study School 1997 – 2004

Results in national tests and GCSE have shown substantive improvement over the past seven years. The percentage of pupils in Year 11 achieving 5A* - C grades (five or more subjects at grade C or above) in the GCSE examinations has risen from 25% in 1997 to 71% in 2004. In the same period the percentage achieving 5A* - G grades (five or more subjects at grade G or above) has risen from 78% to 100%. Compared with the Unitary Authority and Wales averages over the same period the increase in levels of attainment by the school are substantive. Whilst the Welsh average for pupils achieving 5A* - C grades has increased by 6%, and that of the unitary authority by 7%, there has been an increase of 46% by the case study school between 1997 and 2004. This is demonstrated in Figure 1 which shows the percentage of pupils achieving 5A* - C grades at GCSE examinations between 1997 to 2004 for the case study school, the unitary authority and Wales as a whole.

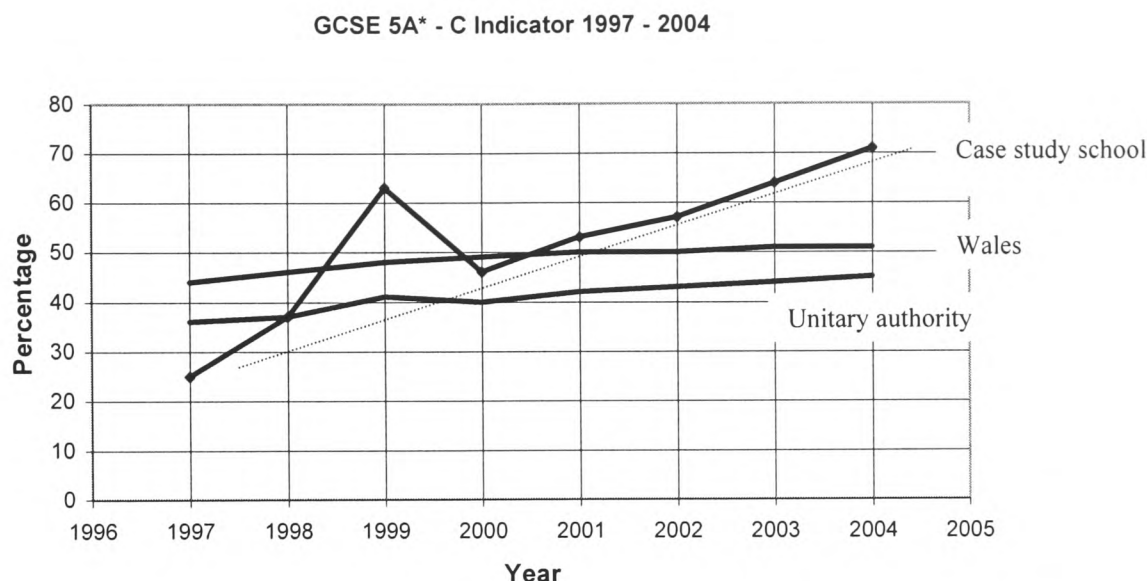


Figure 1 Percentage of pupils achieving 5A* - C grades at GCSE in the period 1997 – 2004 for the case study school, the unitary authority and Wales as a whole. The dotted line represents the average trend of the case study school during the period covered by this research.

Source: GCSE, ELQ(1) and Equivalent Achievements, National Assembly for Wales, RE2 Forms 1997 - 2004

Figure 1 shows a number of interesting features. For the case study school, the unitary authority and Wales the graphs demonstrate a rise in the percentage of pupils achieving 5A* - C grades between 1997 and 2004. Whilst the graphs for Wales and the unitary authority follow similar trends in improvement, that for the case study school shows a marked difference in growth. In 1997 the achievement of the case study school was below that of both the unitary authority and Wales but by 2004 was significantly ahead of both. In 1999 there was a significant leap in the percentage achieving 5A* - C grades in the case study school, falling back in 2000 to below the Welsh average. Since 2001 the rate of growth in achievement has been significantly greater than the unitary authority and Wales.

The dotted line represents the averaged results for the case study school for the period 1997 – 2004 and apart from the anomalous result that occurred in 1999 the rate of growth is relatively linear, with a gradient greater than that of the unitary authority and Wales. There appears to be no logical explanation for the anomalous result produced in 1999 and for the purposes of this research the averaged general trend will be taken as indicative of the substantive and sustained improvement in attainment between 1997 and 2004 for the case study school. It might be hypothesised from the data that the value added by the case study school is significant. This hypothesis has been tested using external and independent measures of pupil's prior attainment levels as outlined below.

Evidence the for value added by the Case Study School 1997 - 2004

Introduction

In the following section I intend demonstrating that the value added by the case study school during the period 1997 – 2004 has been substantive. Further, I will also make the case that the substantive improvement in performance cannot be attributed to changes in the cohort of the school. Three independent instruments have been used to demonstrate the value added by the case study school and are described in detail within this account. The instruments used were the results from MidYIS (Mid-Years testing) testing, FFT (Fischer Family Trust) analysis and the school improvement index calculated by ACCAC (The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales).

The MidYIS Project

Since 1999, the school has participated in the mid-years testing (MidYIS) project coordinated by the Curriculum, Evaluation and Management Centre (CEM) at Durham University, which involves Year 7 pupils on entry to the school undertaking a range of MidYIS standardised tests, set and marked by CEM and covering tests on vocabulary, mathematical skills, non-verbal reasoning and skills.

MidYIS is a 45-minute test of developed ability that has been designed to be a predictor of later academic achievement, enabling value added measures to be made at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4. The MidYIS Project began in 1996 with a pilot study involving over 200 schools. From the MidYIS test scores, CEM provides a profile of the pupils who are placed into one of four groups A, B, C or D, depending on the overall standardised scores achieved by the pupil. For the purposes of the analysis of the entry profile to the school, MidYIS take 100 as the standardised score and group pupils according to their total score. Pupils are placed in Group A for scores greater than 110, Group B for scores 102 – 110, Group C for scores 90 – 101 and Group D for scores less than 90.

The tests are designed to measure developed abilities rather than achievement, and are timed so that most pupils will not finish. Pupils are made aware of this before they begin the test. The standardised administration conditions across the hundreds of schools who participate ensures that the MidYIS tests provide a measure of developed abilities and a fair nationally standardised baseline from which value added measures can be made from the MidYIS tests to Key Stage 3 and subsequently the major GCSE subjects.

The tests are given under timed examination conditions. Each assessment is administered through an audiotape that takes the pupils through all the instructions and timings of the individual sections of the test. The use of an audiotape ensures a standardised administration process. No pre-test work is required. All pupils hear the same information and examples and receive the same amount of help throughout, ensuring that the baseline test gives a measure of typical performance and is fair to both pupils and schools. The whole testing process lasts about one hour.

Each of the Year 7 MidYIS tests consist of the following sections:

- Vocabulary
- Maths
- Proof Reading
- Perceptual Speed and Accuracy (P.S.A)
- Cross-Sections
- Block Counting
- Pictures

The purpose of the analysis is firstly, to give predictive data about the likely future performance of pupils in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 examinations, based on the evidence provided from all schools participating in the MidYIS project. Secondly, it provides the school with value added measures once pupils have sat Key Stage 3 or 4 examinations by comparing actual and predicted grades based on the MidYIS test results at the point of entry to the school.

The correlation figure, which is a measure of the strength of relationship between MidYIS Test and GCSE, shows that there is a strong positive relationship between MidYIS Tests and later examination performance. Therefore I can be confident that MidYIS Tests provide good predictions of likely performance at GCSE. The table provides information of the correlation between the MidYIS tests carried out in Year 7 and the GCSE results produced in 2005 for English, maths and science.

Subject	Correlation	Sample size
English	0.70	73, 172
Maths	0.73	73, 224
Science	0.68	52, 940

(MidYIS information sheet, January 2006, Issue 26, p6)

The data from the MidYIS testing is used for two purposes in this research. The first purpose is to provide an indication of the entry profile of the pupils over time. The second to provide evidence of the value added between Year 7 and the end of Year 9, when pupils sit the Key Stage 3 SATS examinations. 2004 provided the first opportunity to examine the value added between Year 7 and 11. For the case study school the pupil profile, based on the groupings A, B, C and D previously defined for 1999/2000 – 2003/2004 is shown in Figure 2.

Academic Year of entry	Percentage of cohort in each group A, B, C and D			
	A	B	C	D
1999/2000	20.6	33.1	23.5	22.8
2000/2001	14.6	25.5	30.6	29.3
2001/2002	22.0	32.7	25.6	19.6
2002/2003	23.5	34.7	25.9	15.9
2003/2004	28.8	28.2	21.8	21.2

Figure 2 Percentage of pupils in groups A, B, C and D as determined through MidYIS testing for the cohorts joining the case study school in year 7 during the period 1999 – 2004.

(Source MidYIS Project, CEM Centre, University of Durham)

The school joined the scheme in 1999 and therefore has no information from this source prior to that date. The 1999/2000 academic entry provided the first opportunity for value added measures to be made when the cohort sat the Key Stage 3 examinations in summer 2002. Similarly the 2000/2001 cohort enabled value added measures to be calculated by CEM based on the outcomes of the Key Stage 3 examinations sat in 2003 and the 2001/2002 cohort value added measures for Key Stage 3 examinations in 2004. These are illustrated in Figures 3, 4 and 5. The GCSE examination results in summer 2004 provided measures of the value added between Year 7 and 11 for the first time based on the MidYIS testing that took place in 1999/2000.

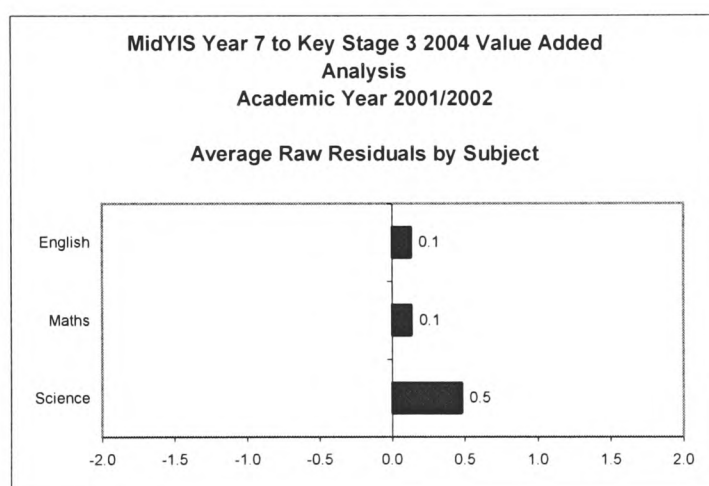


Figure 3 Value added measure for science, maths and English between end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 for pupils entering the case study school in 2001.

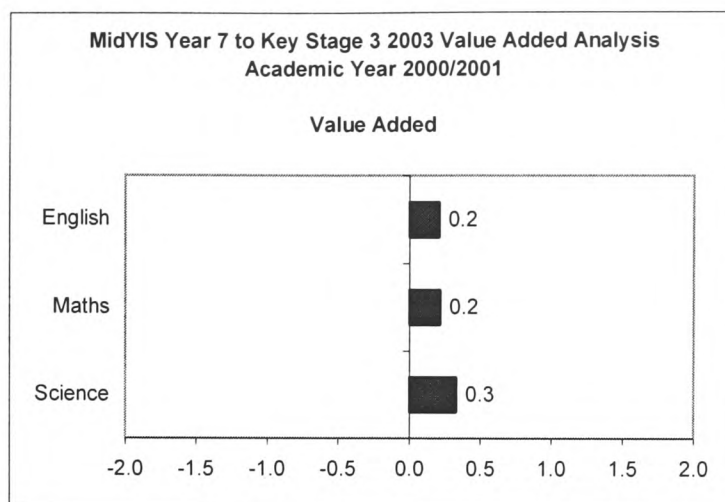


Figure 4 Value added measure for science, maths and English between end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 for pupils entering the case study school in 2000.

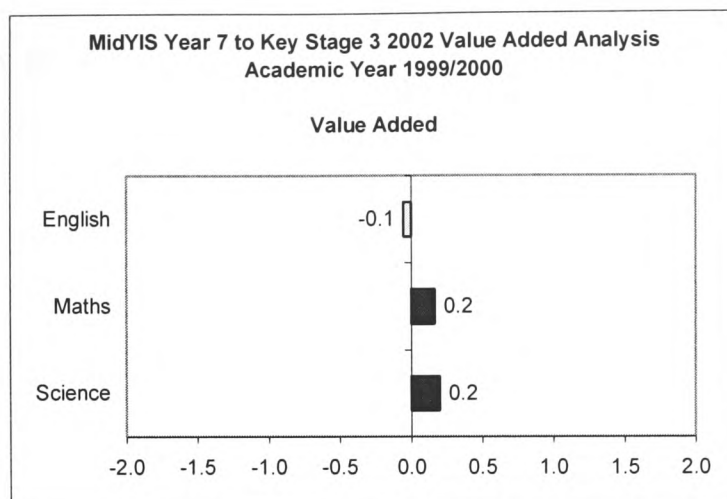


Figure 5 Value added measure for science, maths and English between end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 for pupils entering the case study school in 1999.

Figures 3 - 5 (Source CEM, University of Durham)

A positive Raw Residual means that, on average pupils in your institution did better in a subject than pupils of similar ability in the rest of the nationally representative MidYIS sample. By the same token, a negative Raw Residual means that, on average, your pupils did not do as well in that particular subject when compared to pupils of similar ability in the rest of the sample who took the subject. The bars on the graph are expressed in terms of fractions of a Key Stage 3 level.

The three sets of data, the pupil profile and value added measures, provide evidence that there have been no significant changes in the profile of the pupils entering the school over the period this research is concerned with and that based on the results at Key Stage 3, the school is providing overall value added between the start of Year 7 and the end of Year 9. Significantly, whilst the percentage in Group A for the pupil cohort in 2000/2001 dipped by 6% compared with the previous year, the Key Stage 3 results produced by this cohort placed the pupils above those pupils making the same progress nationally and above those made by pupils in similar schools (based on the Free School Meal indicator, FSM). Based on the prior attainment of the pupils at Key

Stage 2, it may have been expected that the percentage achieving the core subject indicator (CSI), those achieving at least level 5 in maths, science and English, would fall when the 2000/2001 cohort sat the Key Stage 3 examinations, whereas in fact the CSI continued its upward trend.

The Annual Performance Review (APR) produced by ESIS (Education and School Improvement Service) the unitary authority's advisory service drew attention to this in their report in January 2004.

"At Key Stage 3 there is a strong upward trend overall and positive value added scores on all indicators. The comparative data shows that in value added terms the school is adding value. The core subject indicator (CSI) on 3-year trends has continued to rise and in 2003 the school achieve its highest success rate with a score for level 5+ of 59%. The school's score is now well above that of the LEA and Wales as a whole". (Annual Performance Review, 2004)

In discussing performance at Key Stage 4, the report also stated:

"The upward trend is stronger than across Wales. The 2003 results comfortably exceeds both the national average and the LEA average. The school exceeds the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) value added estimate by 7% on the 5A - C indicator. The CSI saw a 9% rise in performance taking it to a creditable 15% above national average. The school exceeds the FFT value added estimates by a very significant 17% on this indicator". (Annual Performance Review, 2004)*

Fischer Family Trust Analysis

The Fischer Family Trust (FFT) is an independent, non-profit making organization mainly involved in undertaking and supporting projects that address the development of education in the UK. Through the 'Making Effective Use of Performance Data' project, the trust aims to provide LEAs with analyses and data to help schools make more effective use of pupil performance data. Using a database that contains

performance information on over 10 million pupils in England and Wales, the Trust has worked closely with Professor David Jesson of the University of York to develop a series of models to analyse pupil progress during Key Stages 2, 3 and 4. From these models, a range of analyses has been developed. These analyses provide an indication, based on prior attainment and the progress made by similar pupils nationally, of the likely range of attainment that might be expected at pupil, school and LEA level.

The Fischer Family Trust examines the pupil data at Key Stage 2 and 3 and provides a statistically modelled approach to predicting future outcomes at Key Stage 3 and 4. These are provided at a pupil and whole school level and are presented for four different scenarios. Schools are expected to use the data to help establish targets for improvement and can monitor their progress relative to other schools within Wales. Expected outcomes based on the Key Stage 3 baseline data are calculated for each of the following scenarios.

Type A: Details what might be expected if pupils make the same progress as that made nationally by similar pupils last year. Here, similar pupils are defined as those of the same gender and with similar prior attainment scores.

Type B: Details what might be expected if pupils make the same progress as that made nationally by similar pupils last year. Here, similar pupils are defined as those of the same gender, with similar prior attainment scores and in similar schools (as defined by Free School Meal entitlement).

Type C: Build upon type B estimates but indicate what might be expected if, overall, there is sufficient improvement to meet national or, where provided, LEA targets.

Type D: Build upon type B estimates but indicate what might be expected if pupils make the same progress as that made last year by pupils in schools which were in the 'top 20%' of schools nationally. The 'top 20%' is based upon a value-added calculation taking into account prior attainment and school context.

The Fischer Family Trust (FFT) predictions use information about prior attainment that is set against the birth dates and gender of the pupils. Predictions are also contextualised using the attainment of similar pupils across Wales.

For the 2002/2003 Key Stage 4 cohort in the case study school the percentages projected by the FFT for the four pupil types were A - 55%, B - 55%, C - 57% and D - 60% for the 5A* - C indicator at GCSE. The actual results produced by the case study school in 2003 for this indicator was 62% (verified by the RE2 Form published by the Welsh Assembly Government) suggesting substantive value added since the results were 7% above that which would have been achieved by the same rate of progress as other schools nationally. The same picture emerges when the core indicator is examined, the core indicator being the percentage of pupils achieving at least a grade C in English, maths and science at GCSE. Whereas the Fischer Family Trust had predicted 37% based on the similar progress as other schools (and 36% for similar schools), the actual percentage achieved was 49%, some 7% above the value needed to place the school in the top 20% of schools nationally. The pattern is repeated in other years during the period 1998 – 2003.

It is possible using the Fischer Family Trust data to compare the performance of pupils over time and to compare actual KS4 results with expected results based on prior

attainment at KS2 and KS3. A summary of these is given in figure 6 for the period 1999 – 2003. The percentages show the difference between the actual and estimated grades based on prior attainment for the percentage achieving 5A* - C grades. In the academic year 2002/2003 all the figures provided by the Fischer Family Trust indicated that the differences were significant in a statistical sense. “*‘Significant’ means that we can be 95% certain, taking into account the number of pupils, that the difference is unlikely to arise by ‘chance’* “. (Fischer Family Trust, 2004).

Academic Year	All pupils	Boys	Girls	Boys Lower	Boys Middle	Boys Higher	Girls Lower	Girls Middle	Girls Higher
99/00	-4.5	-3.7	-5.3	-2.0	-13.7	1.9	-5.4	-15.8	2.9
00/01	-0.8	-3.2	1.8	2.0	-11.5	-1.4	-1.6	3.1	3.0
01/02	-1.7	-1.7	-1.8	11.0	-18.3	4.2	-3.6	-9.9	7.8
02/03	17.7	14.4	21.6	9.5	30.1	6.1	19.5	28.8	12.1

Figure 6 The percentage differences between actual and predicted grades for the academic years 1999 – 2003 based FFT analysis (*FFT, 1999 – 2003*)

Lower, Middle and Upper refer to the ability bands of the pupils based on KS2 and KS3 prior attainment levels. The data reveals some interesting trends. The first significant difference to note is that the academic year 02/03 produced substantive gains over expected achievement based on prior attainment levels, especially in the middle ability band for both boys and girls. For the boys this represented a change since 99/00 of +43.8% and the girls, +44.6%. The pupils in the academic year 02/03 entered the school in 1998, coinciding with the change in the leadership of the school. They represent the first complete cohort to have gone through the compulsory school years at secondary school under the new leadership of the school, the period this research is concerned with.

The jump in the percentages between 01/02 and 02/03 is quite substantive. For all pupils the change in percentage being approximately 10 times the 01/02 figure. For all categories of pupil there is an upward trend during the period 1999 – 2003 in the difference between actual and expected percentages based on prior attainment information, pointing to an increase in the value added to the percentages achieved by pupils.

The value added is a more meaningful measure since it does not depend on the ability range of the cohort under consideration and gives an indication of the relative school improvement over time, where the raw percentages for those achieving 5A* - C would not. It is probably not surprising to find that while the value added has increased for all ability levels, including boys and girls, that the differential improvement is much greater for the middle ability band than the extremes of the ability spectrum. The smallest gain being shown by the higher ability boys, moving through +4.2 percentage points since 1999.

The way in which the value added percentages have changed over time for the various ability bands at KS4 is illustrated in Figure 7.

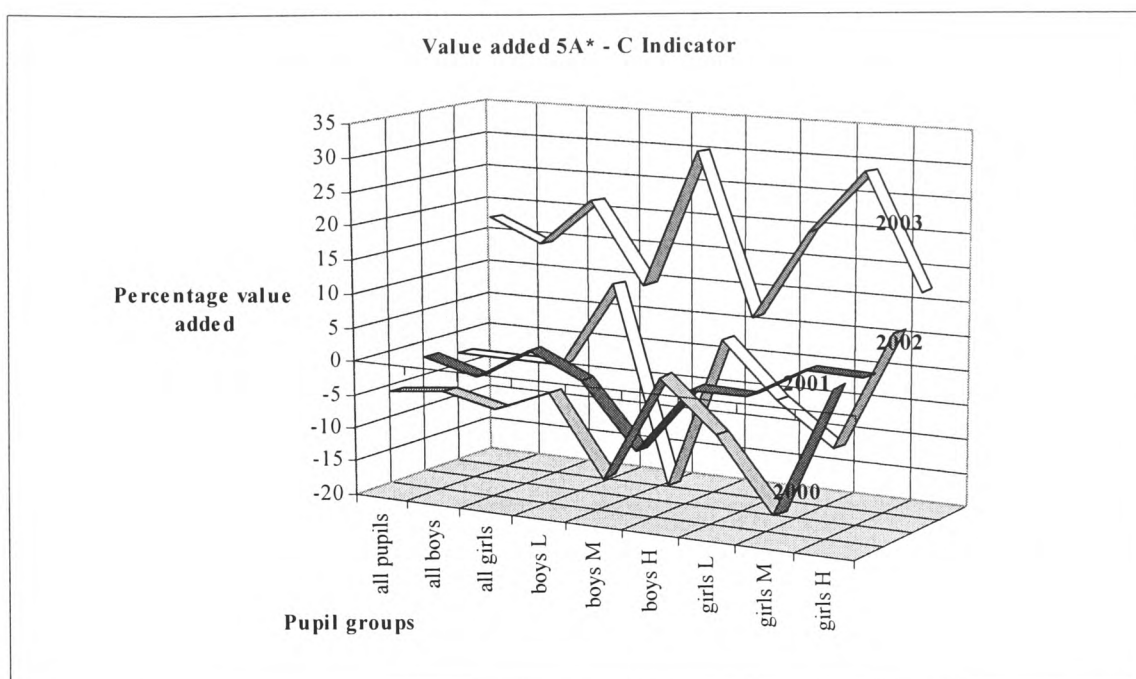


Figure 7 The percentage difference between actual and predicted grades over the period 2000 – 2003 based on FFT analysis.

The percentage value added is plotted on the vertical axis and represents the percentage difference between the estimated 5A* - C percentage based on prior attainment levels at KS2 and KS3 and the actual percentage achieving 5A* - C grades in the KS4 examinations. A negative value added indicates that the pupils were under performing relative to expectation and a positive value that they achieved at a better level than might have been expected based on prior attainment levels. The value added percentages are based on similar schools, FSM indicator, and for pupils of similar KS2 and KS3 histories. The various pupil bands are indicated on the horizontal axis, corresponding to the bands identified in figure 6. The four graphs represent the data for the year of examination in 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003 the most recent set of data available.

There are a number of key features illustrated by the graph. The overall variations for the 2003 cohort show a marked upward shift from 2000, indicating a significant increase in the value added compared with previous years. The 2000 graph lies largely in the negative part of the y-axis, indicating that in general the cohort were under performing relative to their prior attainment levels at KS2 and KS3; there was no overall added value between KS2 and KS4. The average percentage value added for years 2000 and 2001 indicate a slight upward trend, and for each graph there are similar peaks and troughs occurring for the various ability bands, whereas 2002 shows some interesting reversals of the peaks and troughs. Although these are interesting features, and worthy of further investigation, they fall outside the remit of this research, other than to provide evidence that over the period 2000 to 2003 substantive gains have been made in the value added percentages and these have coincided with the restructuring and change in leadership of the case study school; lending additional evidence that leadership practices may impact on pupil outcomes and school improvement.

Measures for the core indicator, those achieving at least grade C in English, maths and science, in the same period are equally remarkable. For all pupils in 99/00 the differential between actual and expected was – 4.5%, indicating a small level of underperformance relative to prior attainment; in 02/03 the differential was 20.9%, a significant difference, showing a considerable increase in the value added over previous years. The differences for the middle ability boys and girls are substantive, with a value added of +46.3% for boys and +43.8% for girls, the same indicators in 99/00 were – 2.1% and – 12.5 % respectively.

The Fischer Family Trust carrying out a similar exercise for the Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 transition based on the baseline assessment at Key Stage 2. In 2003 the CSI for the case study school indicated a greater value added than that expected for pupils of similar ability nationally and for pupils in similar schools as measured by the FSM indicator. The unitary authority together with the advisory service and Fischer Family Trust (FFT) provide further triangulation in support of the value added by the case study school and are able to demonstrate that compared with schools in general the improvements by the case study school fall within the top 20% of all schools in Wales.

Additional, independent supportive evidence of the value added was provided by the MidYIS measurements on the GCSE results in 2004. The value added between Y7 (1999) when the initial MidYIS testing took place and Y11 (2004) when GCSE examinations were sat by the cohort was on average, 0.6 GCSE grades per subject per pupil. The analysis reveals that at individual pupil level the overall value added across GCSE subjects entered was as high as 22 grades.

The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales

The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) provide independent and further evidence for the substantive improvements in academic performance at GCSE by producing each year the School Improvement Index. The calculation of the index is based on the last six years' results and involves comparing the school's average score per pupil for two successive (non-overlapping) three-year periods, and then dividing this by the national difference. An index of greater than 1 means that the school has improved by more than the average for the whole of Wales; less than 1 show schools have improved by less than the national

average; and a negative score for any school indicates performance has declined over the 6-year period. The mean index of improvement is 1.0. Schools achieving the greatest index in a regional area are awarded the most improved school award for that particular year.

In 1999, 2001 and 2005 the case study school achieved the regional area Most Improved School Award with an index of 14.8 in 1999, 2.9 in 2001 and 6.9 in 2005. Furthermore, the index achieved in 2003 was 2.1 and in 2004 was 3.0. The positive and higher than average index in each of the years 1999 – 2005 suggest that the case study school is demonstrating sustained improvement over time at nearly six times the Welsh national average and suggests effective value added between the end of Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. The graphs of the Welsh, Unitary Authority and case study school GCSE results over the period 1997 – 2004 shown in Figure 1 demonstrate this. Whilst the 5A* - C indicator has increased by 46 percentage points since 1997, the LEA has increased by only 7 percentage points and the Welsh average by 6 percentage points. The evidence from MidYIS baseline data assessment indicates that there has been no significant change in the academic profile of the pupils since 1999, suggesting strongly that improvements are being driven through internal measures and strategies.

“The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) has, for the third time, recognised the school as the most improved school in South East Wales...ACCAC referred to this as, ‘a remarkable result’, and it is thus an outstanding feature”. (School Inspection Report, 2006, p11)

The evidence from the GCSE results over time, MidYIS testing and regression modelling, ACCAC school improvement index and the Fischer Family Trust analysis of prior attainment and the difference between expected and actual grades, suggest that the improvements in the performance of the case study school have been substantive

and sustained over the period of considerable change and growth between 1997 and 2004. It is highly unlikely that the improvements can be explained in terms of chance, or the changing academic profile of the pupils entering the school, a point identified in the Estyn school inspection report of 2000.

“The ability profile on entry reflects the full range of ability. There is evidence of added value in the performance of virtually all pupils”. (Estyn Inspection Report, February 2000)

The evidence cited, particularly in relation to the added value at KS4, for the case study school, seems to indicate some connection between leadership and improved school performance.

The case study school during the period 1991 – 1998

Introduction

In this section I describe pupil performance in the case study school during the period 1991 – 1998 using the 1994 inspection report as the main source of evidence. The section concludes with an overview of the political backdrop to the case study school and how this may have contributed to the way in which the school developed during this period.

Pupil Performance 1991 – 1998

Analysis of performance data and internal documentation relating to the period 1991 to April 1998, together with staff interviews during the period January – April 1998 revealed that the case study school had a number of significant weaknesses relating to pupil performance, teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluation and assessment. However, it also pointed to a school with a strong community spirit and an effective operational pastoral framework. The data analysis enabled formulation of an

understanding of the culture of the school, its strengths and weaknesses, and the areas that needed to be tackled for improvements in performance to be made when I took up appointment in April 1998.

"The school I inherited had a strong identity...with a very protective culture...However, it was still weak academically with limited expectations and superficial attention being paid to the quality of teaching and learning. The school had become defensive and inward looking...this tended to restrict academic horizons...and limited the potential achievements of its pupils. The school lacked a clear and shared vision". (Beales, 1999, p14)

The 1994 inspection carried out under section 9 of the Education (schools) Act 1992, had identified significant areas for improvement, but judging from the documentation and data analysis carried out in 1998, these still remained serious areas of concern. The following extracts from the 1994 inspection report illustrate some of the areas of concern:

'Teaching strategies are limited...expectations of pupils are sometimes low.' (p5)

'...the general effectiveness of the management structure is yet to be tested.' (p5)

'An external audit was held in the year. In some respects its report is critical. The school is acting upon the recommendations although some matters have yet to be resolved.' (p5)

'...independent learning and problem solving skills are underdeveloped.' (p6)

'...the quality of learning is unsatisfactory.' (p6)

'Some of the more able pupils find the pace too slow and the work not challenging enough, whilst those less able struggle to understand the work and to keep up with the pace set by the teacher.' (p6)

'No work of an outstanding quality was recorded in any subject' (p6)

'Throughout the school relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves, are very good. The fact that it is possible to leave coats in the cloakroom bears testimony to the pupils' sense of social awareness and to the school's success in developing respect and consideration for others.' (p7)

'Systems to maintain and to evaluate the quality of educational provision are still in their early stages.' (p10)

'The head recognises that much has still to be done to improve attendance and examination performance.' (p10)

'In-service education and training (INSET) for staff, to date, has given insufficient emphasis to the improvement of teacher performance in the classroom or in terms of NC updating.' (p11)

'...a high percentage of the teaching is carried out by non-specialists and, without close guidance and monitoring, such staff have difficulty in providing adequate learning experiences for pupils.' (p11)

'The assessment on which setting and streaming is based is sometimes poor and needs more careful monitoring.' (p13)

'There is little extended dialogue between teacher and pupil, nor between pupils themselves; probing for meaning and for deeper understanding do not feature sufficiently in a significant minority of classes.' (p17)

'Resourcing generally, however, is inadequate to meet the demands of the national curriculum.' (p17)

'Pupils are often involved in copying tasks and more able pupils do not always work to their full potential.' (p22)

(School Inspection Report, 1994)

Whilst having a friendly and supportive culture, with firm discipline, the school had significant academic weaknesses due to the underdevelopment of its core purpose of teaching and learning (in 1994 the percentage achieving 5A*-C grades in the GCSE was 13%) and a vision that emphasised the traditional values of effective discipline, modelling itself on a public school ethos of community spirit, small classes and personal attention, but ignoring the academic achievements of many public schools or the fact that economically, public schools were much better placed to finance curriculum initiatives.

"Here we have created a select, civilised environment emulating the finer qualities of the traditional British private school". (PH, School Prospectus, 1997)

Political backdrop of the case study school

Of equal importance was what appeared to be the school's defensiveness and often open hostility towards the Welsh Office, the education authority and other secondary schools in the area. Most of the hostility emanated from a historical perspective where, in a particularly strong political arena, the governing body had opted to remove the school from local authority control in 1991 to save being closed because of falling roles.

"...1991 was a dark day for the Labour Party in Wales. To the sounds of the anthem You'll Never Walk alone echoing through the white-walled corridors,...school finally cut loose from the Labour-run county council. Four years on, the opposition to ...school is stronger than ever...In county hall he is person non grata...the animosity is probably worse now than two or three years ago, but mainly from the LEA". (Beard, The Western Mail, 1996)

In the early years, opting out of local authority control resulted in ostracism by the authority and local secondary and primary schools, to the extent that no school in the area was allowed to arrange games fixtures with the school and the authority refused to recognise a catchment area for it.

"...opt-out school at...is being shunned by some comprehensives who are refusing to play sporting fixtures against them". (Walker, Mail on Sunday, 1991)

"Vendetta hits self-run school – parents condemn 'spiteful' sports ban by rival heads." (Iliff, The Sunday Express, 1991)

"...school, which opted out rather than close under Labour council's reorganisation plan, has now been banned from playing sport with neighbouring schools". (Craig, Daily Express, 1992)

"Since the day that decision ...County Council has not ceased a campaign of hostile interference so petty that even the games ...school's children play were not beyond its spite". (James, Daily Mail, 1992)

In 2001 the headteacher made a formal objection to the National Assembly for Wales (NafW) on the grounds of discrimination by the unitary authority with regard to the schools catchment area and other related issues.

“Clearly being denied a catchment area and the lack of transparency in the allocation of capital funding is seriously damaging this school and the pupils in it. Whilst the systems I have put in place have raised standards and attracted more customers the lack of access to capital funding is putting at risk the further development of the school and the standards being achieved”.
(CH, Letter to Schools Management Division, National Assembly for Wales, 16th February 2001)

The education authority redeployed the teaching staff employed at the school in 1991 when the school became Grant Maintained. Within only a matter of weeks of opening in September 1991 the case study school was still attempting to attract and employ teachers willing to work at the school.

In 1998 the majority of the staff employed by the school were those who had joined the school in 1991 and had experienced first hand the political dimension associated with being a grant maintained school. The fact that the school had survived for seven years, despite the opposition to it, meant it had produced a cohort of staff united by their mutual opposition to external agencies, particularly the LEA, and proud of what the school had achieved in spite of the opposition it had faced. Achievements being narrowly focussed around increased numbers on role, successful sporting and music traditions rather than in terms of academic performance.

The headteacher at the time made very effective use of the level of mistrust between the school and external agencies, not only for uniting the staff against a perceived ‘common enemy’ but in selling the uniqueness of the school to prospective parents and, significantly, blaming the lack of support by the LEA and the Welsh Office for

shortfalls in the schools performance, perhaps negating the responsibility it had for the standards of education provided within the school. In short, the external political dimension and internal drive for passive, well-behaved pupils distanced staff, governors and parents from the primary function of teaching and learning. To a certain extent the school community was removed from the changing educational-political landscape that called for greater accountability and improved performance, monitored through the inspection framework and WAG performance data analysis.

A change of national government in 1997 and the introduction of Foundation Status in 1998 produced additional concerns for grant maintained schools including the case study school.

“Heads of grant-maintained schools are demanding to be able to appeal directly to the Secretary of State if they feel their local education authority is intimidating them”. (Times Educational Supplement, Feb. 13th 1998)

The depth of the political feeling surrounding the school and its impact on the internal operation is illustrated by extracts from letters in the school archives:

“It is patently obvious that the political dogma of the local elected bigots precludes children who attend Grant Maintained Schools...how absurd are these zealots going to get before they realise just why they are in office? It isn't to appease the local 'ruling party', but to represent the local community regardless of political belief, or method of education”. (Letter to the Chair of the Governors from a local resident in support of the school, January 15th, 1998)

“...I would object in the strongest possible terms to any proposal for the development by...school and I am sure that you are fully aware of the local (and national) political ramifications to which such a development would lead”. (Memo to Chief Planning Officer of the Unitary Authority from the Head of Professional Services with the authority who later was appointed Director of Education in the authority, August 28th, 1997)

“...school attracted the brunt of political and LEA hostility at its inception...but has succeeded despite attempts at suppression”. (Letter to

prospective applicants for Headteacher post from Chair of Governors,
December 8th, 1997)

The change in government and the perceived threat of foundation status where greater control would lie in the hands of the 'hostile' authority triggered the early retirement of the previous head in July 1997. Between September 1997 and April 1998, the school was under the management of an acting head who maintained the status quo until the new headteacher took up appointment.

The political hostility to the school continues, despite thirteen years since gaining grant maintained status. A flavour of this can be gleaned from the attempt by the unitary authority to recommend closure of the school's sixth form despite the fact that the school is protected from such interference through the relevant statutory acts relating to foundation schools. The Director of Education, as part of the public consultation exercise, convened a meeting to discuss the proposed reorganisation plans in March 2003.

"The methods employed by the recommendation group have been heavy-handed and not sufficiently consultative resulting in a dreadful quality rationale, the absence of parental confidence in the recommendations made, the absence of pupil confidence in the recommendations made, the absence of staff confidence in the recommendations made and the absence of governor confidence in the recommendations made.

Evidence for this is varied and revealing:-

- 1. Pupils in [] High School and other schools in the area have not been widely consulted at any point during the compilation of the recommendations even though it directly impinges on their future. Negligible efforts have been made to find out their needs even though their needs have been invoked in an attempt to justify the recommendation.*
- 2. Mr [] laid down the principle that the sixth form close prior to the rationale being drawn up and despite the fact that this recommendation was not made at the consultation workshops in October. This has resulted in a set of spurious and contrived 'arguments' and a patronising 'consultation exercise' that was nothing more than a thinly veiled fait accompli.*

3. *When asked in the meeting for a copy of the minutes that would constitute the representations made of staff concerns to the council staff received the reply, 'If we decide it's appropriate we will send you a copy'. This is outrageously patronising, destroys the little confidence that staff might have had that they would receive a fair representation at the Council meeting, and gives the impression that the decision-making process is to be behind closed doors and not open to our scrutiny or input.*
4. *[], the organisation responsible for the recommendation, has not even once sent a representative to visit the school.*
5. *[] is something of a misnomer given the fact that the data used to arrive at the silly, sweeping statements found in the rationale as well as an explanation of the manner in which the data was interpreted is nowhere to be found".*

(Letter to council members from the headteacher, March 28th 2003)

The continuing animosity and distrust by the school of those in the unitary authority has not served to galvanise effective relationships between the school and other schools in the area. Arguably the level of mistrust that is evident restricts the sharing of good practice and effective educational development. Following the 'public consultation' exercise in March 2003 and clarification by the NAFW that the unitary authority had no statutory right to propose the closure of the sixth form, plans to close it were subsequently shelved by the authority.

Factors affecting the progress of the case study school 1991 - 1998

Introduction

Analysis of archive material suggests a number of reasons for the underachievement of the case study school during the period 1991 – 1998. The purpose of this section is to outline these reasons and to indicate how they may have affected the performance of the school during this period. Amongst others, the lack of direction and clarity of vision together with the underdevelopment of staff competencies are seen as critically important.

Competency deficit

Whilst the school articulated a vision that embraced the ideals of the independent sector in the period 1991 – 1998 the reality was a school experiencing a competency deficit. By this I mean that teaching staff had limited knowledge of recent educational initiatives and inadequate understanding of teaching and learning strategies. The strained relationships of the previous seven years between the school, the advisory service and the LEA had meant that any feedback on performance was perceived as an attack on the integrity of the school fuelled by political rather than educational motives. Instead of operating open and flexible boundaries with the external community to encourage a two-way exchange of information, the boundary was fixed and impenetrable creating an insular and, increasingly, a school community distanced from mainstream educational initiatives and support mechanisms.

Limited strategic direction

There was no clear unifying vision related to pupil performance or mechanisms in place for monitoring and evaluation; few policies or structures existed, rather a vision focused on survival against the backdrop of the perceived hostile political climate. Middle managers worked in isolation, more often than not preoccupied with administrative tasks, with no common understanding of whole school needs or aspirations, professional development was largely extemporized being unrelated to the needs of the school or its development.

“The emphasis was on quiet classes rather than teaching strategies. There was no real strategic plan for the whole school and although there were isolated pockets of good practice these were not shared. Department meetings consisted mainly of information giving rather than development”. (LG, Semi-structured interview, December 13th 2003)

Underdeveloped data analysis techniques

Evidence taken from the school development plan 1997 – 2000 (developed under the previous headteacher), shows subject areas providing targets for pupil performance with no linked strategy to show how they might be achieved or the rationale that underpinned how they were set. Examination data was presented as factual statements of results without any accompanying comparative analysis either external to the school or internally between different teaching groups. Consequently, informed or detailed interpretation of results could not be made, or targets for improvement established with confidence, underpinned by a clear rationale. The lack of appropriate data analysis prevented emerging patterns of performance to be identified, enabling weak classroom performance to go unchallenged. Teacher expectations depended on individual interpretation/aspirations rather than being galvanised through clearly articulated whole school aims and objectives.

For the majority of the staff the school had been their first and only place of work since qualifying as teachers and consequently professional competencies were limited by the lack of experience and effective professional development training in the school. The school development plan highlighted hostility from the former LEA, ambivalence of some junior schools towards the school, lukewarm relationships with the Welsh Office, the indifference of the English educational establishments towards Wales and the political climate of South Wales as important aspects underpinning school strategies.

Evidence of low expectations and limited teaching and learning strategies

The pupils were generally docile and well behaved, but with low academic expectations. Pupils were passive receivers of information, with learning limited to sitting in rows copying from the board and listening to the teacher. Those unable to abide by the code of conduct of the school were swiftly moved on through permanent exclusions. Staff, pupils and governing body felt secure in this environment, perhaps not fully aware of the dangers that the next inspection could bring to the school if it were found to have failed to improve significantly in those areas highlighted by the 1994 inspection. Extracts of notes to an external advisor invited by me to talk to staff in October 1998 give an indication of some of the areas of concern, suggesting minimal progress had been made since the 1994 inspection.

"[] I have read the document you left me and feel that you could usefully stress the following aspects on October 2nd. They would serve to reinforce some of the issues I have raised with staff since April.

- expectations of teachers; currently a culture tending to assume valleys pupils have limited potential, consequently level of teaching not as challenging as it might be and assessment tasks sometimes inappropriately pitched

- size of class and academic mix not over critical since it is the quality of teaching which matters. The culture created by the teacher for learning and teaching are critical features

- over much reliance on individuals working from text books/work sheets during class. Limits the opportunity for dialogue and interaction between pupils. Restricts opportunities for developing problem solving skills and oracy. There is a 'climate' that still seems to link silence in class with effective learning. This needs to be challenged.

- quality of homework tasks, marking and written feedback need reinforcing. It has been a major thrust in the 'Homework Policy' and via subject leaders meetings. Book review due to take place October half term.

- questioning as a learning strategy is largely undeveloped. Questions are generally being used as a means of control rather than for exploring the thoughts or ideas of pupils. Too much use made of closed questions hence

limiting reasoning ability of pupil being developed. Links in with need for developing thinking skills.

- language acquisition would slot in neatly with our literacy policy. Knock on effect will be in the development of schemes of work and work sheets. Some subject areas have limited idea of how they can reinforce literacy - need guidelines and encouragement.

- importance of establishing aim of a lesson with the pupils at the start of the period

- using assessment in the broadest sense. Tendency to restrict this to tests and homeworks only

- helping pupils achieve their targets". (CH, Memo to external advisor, September 7th, 1998)

Concluding comments

In 1998 the case school was underachieving, exhibiting underdeveloped capacity to improve performance because of limited knowledge of recent educational initiatives and inadequate understanding of teaching and learning strategies. The leadership challenge was to transform the culture of the school to one where there was a shared vision, high expectations and a learning community that enabled sustained improvements in performance to be made through increased staff competencies, organizational capacity and effective strategic action planning.

In this chapter I have outlined the political, educational and social context of the case study school between 1991 and 1998. I have demonstrated using a range of external indicators that since 1998 there have been substantive and sustained improvements in pupil performance at Key Stage 3 and 4. Additionally, I have shown that these improvements are neither attributable to chance nor changes in the academic profile of the pupils. An inference that could be drawn from these observations is that the leadership practices have changed the culture of the school and indirectly, the

performance of pupils and teaching staff. It is my thesis that the changes were a result of transforming leadership practices and it is the aim of this research to identify those aspects of practice that enabled change to occur. The purpose of the literature review is to provide a summary of the various theoretical perspectives of leadership and a normative descriptive framework for describing transforming leadership in practice. Further, I have drawn from the experiential framework as positional leader in the case study school, in an attempt to bridge the gap between theoretical perspectives and theory based on practice.

Extracts from the 1994 inspection report together with contemporaneous documentation and notes indicate that the case study school had significant weaknesses at the time of the inspection. The weaknesses identified in the inspection report continued to be areas of concern in 1998. My thesis is that the inherent weaknesses in pedagogy and stratagems, together with insularity created by political uncertainty and ambiguity was a causal effect of underperformance of the school.

Through detailed analysis of data and archive material I have determined that successful transforming leadership is contingent on a number of key factors. The most significant factors to emerge from this research are competency and capacity. Where competency relates to knowledge and skills and capacity the degree to which change can be accommodated and sustained within an organisation. In this research I have endeavoured to demonstrate how the capacity of the school and competency of teaching staff were developed through transforming leadership practices and change to be augmented.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

Introduction

As previously mentioned, leadership is perceived as central to creating and maintaining effective schools and has been the focus of research, policy and practice. Although the direct effect of the leadership of a school on the achievement of the pupils has been questioned (Hallinger and Heck, 1996), a substantial body of research, OFSTED and Estyn school inspection reports and professional opinion all point to the significance of the leadership of the headteacher or principal in the success of schools and colleges. Whilst not questioning the importance of the headteacher or principal, Silins and Mulford (2002a, 2002b) argue that improved student outcomes is dependent on the development of effective organisational learning, the mediating link between transforming leadership and teacher's work in the classroom.

Effective and efficient leadership is seen as central to raising standards of performance and empowering schools, Beare et al (1997). A similar conclusion drawn by the HMI Annual Report (2003) on leadership and management, where it is written:

"Successive annual reports on Her Majesty's Chief Inspectors of Schools have emphasised the importance of high-quality leadership. Indeed, Mike Tomlinson, in his commentary on the 1999/2000 annual report, said that this 'cannot be overestimated'. In his first annual report, 2001/02, David Bell, said that 'consistently effective teaching across all subjects in a school is unlikely without strong and effective leadership and management". OFSTED 2003, p7.

In their case study of 41 secondary schools, involving 500 teachers and 1,300 students in Years 11 and 12, to identify the characteristics that contribute to producing a good senior secondary school, Silins and Murray-Harvey (1999) concluded that while the styles of leadership in a school may not have directly affected students outcomes, it certainly had an impact on the teachers, who in turn directly influenced student

performance. Additionally they concluded that the style of leadership used in these schools was predominantly transformational rather than transactional. The study lends weight to the significance and importance of effective leadership in raising standards of performance albeit through the indirect route suggested by Silins and Murray-Harvey (1999).

Chapter summary

In this chapter I have drawn on a wide range of literature to illustrate the extent and complexity of issues concerned with leadership in schools. In the first section I explore, through the literature, the different interpretations placed on the concept of leadership. I examine the importance that central governments attach to leadership in section two and outline in section three the key constructs that underpin the concept of transformational leadership. Sections four and five return to the theme of central government regulation through leadership training programmes and inspection frameworks to tease out the implications for headteachers in schools. The concept of distributed leadership and the implications for teacher empowerment are discussed in section six and in section seven looks at some of the main reasons for resistance to change and the political dimension of leadership. The concluding section discusses the main issues arising from the literature and outlines some research recommendations and formulates a conceptualisation of leadership in practice.

What is leadership?

What effective and efficient leadership means has occupied educational research over recent years and, whilst various theoretical models and perspectives have been developed, there is remarkably limited consensus on what leadership is or the

interaction and the impact it has on the culture of the school or how the school culture impacts on leadership. Apart from a few notable exceptions, studies of leadership in practice are limited.

Definitions of leadership have a long history. Dubin (1968) considered leadership to be the exercise of authority and making decisions, whereas Fiedler (1967) considered leadership as task orientated, concerned with the co-ordination of teams in the accomplishment of specific and identified tasks. Alternatively Stogdill (1950) defined leadership as the process of influencing activities in the achievement of specific aims and objectives. Whilst Dubin's and Fiedler's concepts of leadership point to positional authority, Stogdill's points to leaders without formal authority but having influence through power, expertise, knowledge and personal qualities, perhaps pre-empting later work on distributed leadership (Gronn, 2000; Harris, 2002; Hopkins and Jackson, 2002; Spillane et al., 2001). Dubin's view of leadership, which is orientated towards decision making, seems more aligned to management than leadership, whilst Fiedler and Stogdill's perspectives point towards the leadership of change. More recently, Bush and Glover (2003) have proposed the definition of leadership as:

"Leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards the achievement of this shared vision". p8

Gronn (1997) on the other hand considers leadership to be attributed status, being the product of the social and organisational context in which it was exercised.

"Leadership is an emergent, attributed status. It is not to be confused with headship nor as something automatically bestowed by virtue of executive role incumbency. Leadership is influence deemed legitimate by followers and

leading is a symbolic activity defined as the framing of meaning". (Gronn, 1997, p 277)

Gronn, perhaps pre-empting the notion that within organisations it is possible to locate and develop leadership potential at all levels. A core principle underpinning the distributed leadership model which Gronn (2000) returns to in his discussion of the new architecture in leadership.

Implied in the Bush and Glover's (2003) definition of leadership is the centrality of vision, although this has not always been the accepted view. Bolam et al (1993) cast doubts on the ability of heads to communicate the vision effectively whilst the research of Greenfield et al (1992) pointed to very strong support for the notion of a clear vision, a view further supported by Beare et al's (1997) research into the behaviours of outstanding leaders; although what characterises vision is not clear. Dempster and Logan's (1998) study of 12 Australian schools showed that parents and staff had high expectations that leaders would have a clear vision for their schools and plan strategically to achieve it.

However, in her work on leadership and followership, Russell (2003), asserts that individuals and groups hope for positive gains through relationships with school leaders, introducing the concept of relational purpose, and the manipulative role of principals, but finds no evidence to support the importance of vision.

"These positional characteristics combined to give leaders a sense of 'overview', which I define as a present-centred 'what there is here now' viewpoint. This was significantly different from the vision commonly attributed to leaders in the literature, and for which I found no evidence".
p149

The case study of Barnett and McCormick (2003) on vision, transformational leadership and teacher motivation in schools provides evidence that vision is an

important element in raising teacher expectations. However they also found limitations on this through contextual constraints and questioned the validity of claiming vision necessarily impacted on teacher performance and pupil outcomes in classrooms.

“Vision included leadership practices such as, building a shared vision, developing consensus and commitment for vision and expression of high expectations. (Barnett and McCormick, 2003, p68)

In addition, principals need to be aware that vision by itself may not be enough to actually influence what teachers do. (Barnett and McCormick, 2003, p70)

Principals should recognise the possibility that context may make leadership behaviours more or less effective. An important implication for a practising principal is that she/he must know and understand the contextual constraints placed on a school by the internal and external environment”. (Barnett and McCormick, 2003, p70)

To a certain extent this raises questions about Burns’s (1978) assertion that through transformational leadership followers transcend their own immediate self interest for the sake of the mission or vision of the organisation and Bass and Avolio’s (1997) and Leithwood et al’s (1999) argument that places transformational leadership processes at the centre of improving performance in schools.

An analysis of the perceptions of teachers’ in schools by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) provide useful insights into the influence of leaders, leading to the hypothesis that being perceived as a leader is crucial to the leaders’ effectiveness. Consequently leaders should be aware of the perceptions of leadership through which practices are interpreted by colleagues and concludes that influence seems to be a necessary part of most conceptions of leadership. The conflict between bureaucratic positional authority and charismatic leadership qualities researched by Eden (1998) showed that leadership is under constant threat where teachers expound alternative meanings of reality. Leaders must shape teachers’ behaviour and cognition to identify with the leadership’s

need for innovation in school, but are not transformed to the extent of initiative-taking themselves.

Moral leadership is based in the values and beliefs of leaders (Bush and Glover, 2003) and was the focus of research by Gold et al (2003) using case studies to provide insights into how values and beliefs were demonstrated through the words and actions of school leaders.

“This literature notes how successful school leaders are driven by personal, moral and educational values and are able to articulate these with total conviction, creating a clear sense of institutional purpose and direction. Such individuals have a passion for the job”. (p135)

The ability of leaders to communicate clear sets of personal and educational values was determined by Day, Harris and Hadfield (2001) as an essential hallmark of effective leaders, similar to the outcomes of Gold et al (2003) in their research of principled principals.

Earley et al's (2002) year long research on leadership of schools in England explored a number of issues including: how leaders understand their role and the values they place on them, the level of competency for leadership and the sources of ideas and inspiration in carrying out their leadership role. The outcome of this research have been used by the Department for Education and Science (DfES) and National College for School Leadership (NCSL) to inform their work and the development of training programmes for serving and aspiring headteachers.

The research of Blase and Blase (1998) on effective instructional leadership concluded that it involved talking with teachers to promote reflection and promoting professional growth. The work of Southworth (2002) has lent further support to this idea by suggesting the three strategies of modelling, monitoring and professional dialogue as

particularly effective in improving teaching and learning. The central role of the principal as the instructional leader of the school and the relationship between this and teachers instructional practice and student engagement was also researched by Quinn (2002) who determined that principals who are strong instructional leaders are a fundamental component in schools that embrace high levels of student engagement and is the most effective medium to affect student achievement. Although Leithwood (1994) suggests that instructional leadership has limited capacity for producing organisational change because it is too classroom focused.

Busher and Barker (2003) looked at the politics of change within educational institutions adding to the previous work of Ball (1987) and Sergiovanni (1995) on the micro-political dimension of school cultures. They argue that leadership and management takes place against fluctuating socio-political backdrops and before new practices can be implemented successfully schools must undergo cultural changes through the inculcation of new positive educational values and beliefs. This is in sharp contrast with the functionalist approach to leadership and management for improving schools implied through the OFSTED inspection framework.

This brief overview of some of the important empirically based research highlights the diversity and complex nature of leadership in schools and demonstrates that no one model of leadership is able to adequately describe the processes and conditions for effective leadership to occur in practice; pointing towards the need for a more dynamic and fluid construct of school leadership.

The government's drive for raising standards and improving leadership

The central government's perspective of school leadership

The governments drive for educational change was signalled through the Education Reform Acts of 1988 and 1992, in which schools were relocated, with other public sector organisations, in the market place synonymous with commercial businesses and enterprise. The wider responsibility and accountability at the school level, has led to increased pressure to provide a more coherent approach to leadership and management development. The importance and centrality of effective leadership in schools was outlined in the White Paper, *Excellence in Schools*, published by the government's in 1997. The governments perspective, and by implication, expectations expressed in the White Paper indicated that the difference between success or failure of a school lay in the quality of the headteacher.

"The vision for learning set out in the White Paper will demand the highest qualities of leadership and management from headteachers. The quality of the heads can often make a difference between success or failure of schools. Good heads can transform a school; poor heads can block progress and achievement". Excellence in Schools, 1997, p46

In tandem with the Excellence in Schools publication, and to support delivery of the expectations explicitly stated therein, developments in the NPQH and OFSTED framework for inspections were put in place.

The NPQH paradigm infers a model of improved efficiency, cost effectiveness, increased accountability and the importance of performance indicators to measure achievement. This 'steering at distance' enables government to blame schools for faults, problems and difficulties that are inherent in, or created by, government policies (Ball, 1993). In effect government policy has shifted responsibility and subsequent accountability to schools, and headteachers in particular, whilst increasing central

control and direction. The increased and tightened inspection regime has ensured compliance to government policies at the same time as reinforcing an accountability model that lays the blame for apparent failures at the headteachers feet.

“When a school is put into special measures, one of the factors leading to this decision is often poor leadership...In many cases the headteacher leaves the school”. (OFSTED, 1998, p4)

“Registered inspectors and schools have queried the apparent severity with which grade descriptions are applied to non-compliance with statutory requirements, compared with the previous framework, and have requested further guidance from OFSTED”. (Update, Autumn 2003, p7)

The new framework of the Office for the Standards in Education (OFSTED) for the inspection of schools, was introduced in September 2003, and requires inspectors to report on leadership and management of the school (OFSTED, 2003) and in particular the extent to which leadership is embedded within the culture and how this impacts on the learning within it. The new framework attaches considerably more importance to leadership and management than the previous framework, mirroring the government's priorities for improving performance and raising standards of achievement together with the social and economic implications of having a better-educated work force.

The framework identifies key elements of leadership to be reported on, in particular OFSTED inspectors will assess whether headteachers:

- *“have a clear vision, with a sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school*
- *have a relentless focus on pupils' achievement*
- *ensure that strategic planning reflects and promotes the school's ambitions and goals*
- *inspire, motivate and influence staff and pupils*
- *create effective teams*
- *have knowledgeable and innovative leadership of teaching and the curriculum*
- *are committed to running an equitable and inclusive school in which each individual matters*

- *provide good role models for other staff and pupils*". (OFSTED, 2003, p41)

The criteria imply a dynamic and fluid approach to leadership, rather than that generally conceptualised through theoretical perspectives where more static constructs of leadership are suggested.

Arguably, much of the research on school leadership focuses on developing a theoretical understanding of leadership, rather than on understanding the practicalities of day-to-day management and the leadership of change (Richmon and Allison, 2003). Moreover, many writers on educational leadership (e.g., Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach 1999) advocate particular stances on leadership that may not be appropriate in all situations.

Furthermore, there is a good case for arguing that the advocacy of a particular leadership approach, transformational leadership (Burns 1978; Bass and Avolio 1994; Leithwood 1994; Bush and Glover 2003), is implicit in government policy. As a consequence the 'theory focus' of much of leadership research and the advocacy of particular modes of leadership is a theory–practice gap and practitioners may find themselves unable to use leadership theories in a helpful way since espoused theories seem far removed from the everyday practicalities of running a school. Some theories focus on the processes by which leadership is exerted whilst others emphasise one or more dimensions of leadership. They are generally normative; in the sense that they can be used as descriptors of leadership outcomes although I would argue that none provide a complete and comprehensive picture of leadership, particularly in the context of the day-to-day reality of leadership decisions and practices.

The fluid and dynamic model of leadership is aligned to developmental leadership which recognises the diverse nature of school contexts and has the advantage of being able to accommodate the varying unique organisational circumstances through flexible leadership styles matched to the needs of the school; avoiding nominating one particular model as a panacea for all contextual eventualities. Leithwood (1994) makes the interesting link between transformational leadership and contingent leadership when he writes:

“Whereas the dimensions of transformational leadership offer a coherent approach to school leadership, specific practices within each dimension vary widely. So advocating a transformational approach to school leadership does not entail the specification of a uniform or rigid set of leadership behaviours”. (p515)

The inspection criteria imply a developmental model of leadership under an umbrella of transformational leadership – consistent with the Leithwood (1994) dimensions of transformational leadership.

The judgements about school leadership using the OFSTED criteria make it clear that there is a connection between what is perceived as effective leadership and standards of school performance. Where leadership is judged to be very good or excellent the grade descriptor characterises such leadership as ensuring the highest standards in all areas of the school, as promoting reflective and self-evaluative practices, underpinned by a clear vision which is implemented through effective strategic thinking and planning. It advocates shared and distributive leadership, supporting an inclusive environment.

There is a clear resonance between those aspects highlighted as exemplifying very good practice and leadership that is described as transformational in the research literature. There appears little ambiguity about the connection between the

governments' perspective of what constitutes effective leadership and transformational leadership articulated through the work of Burns (1978), Bass and Avolio (1994), Leithwood (1994), Bush and Glover (2003) and others in the leadership research domain.

However, neither the research literature nor the inspection framework is able to take full cognisance of the context in which leadership takes place on a day-to-day basis in schools. The inspection framework being constrained by inflexible criterion on which to base judgements and the theoretical constructs of leadership based on assumptions about how schools operate and function.

The purpose of this research is to contribute to educational leadership theory in a way that will be of value to leadership practitioners in schools. From the research I have undertaken it is clear that the way transforming leadership evolved in a school during a period in which individual and organisational capacity for change were developed, in part by focussing on instructional leadership (Calabrese, 1991; De Bevoise, 1984; Greenfield, 1987), and the periodic re-definition of the 'end-point' of change through an articulation of a educational vision, will be significant themes. It is through the 'lenses' of transformational leadership, instructional leadership, the development of individual and organisational capacity and leadership vision, that I will interpret the data.

Leadership typologies implied by the inspection framework (2003) criteria

The purpose of this section is to tease out the implications for leadership in schools following the implementation of the new inspection framework in 2003. The new framework places greater emphasis on the importance of effective leadership than

previously and analysis of the criteria used to make judgements about leadership effectiveness suggests a number of leadership typologies.

The criteria included in the inspection framework for leadership are exemplified by particular descriptors relating to effective and efficient leadership. Shown in Figure 8 are the descriptors used to exemplify good to excellent practice in the leadership of a school; included alongside are the typologies of leadership implied by the particular descriptor used.

Descriptor for good to excellent practice

Implied typology of leadership

Leadership that is also inspirational, or that has resulted in a much improved school or one with outstanding features, and which is highly influential beyond the school, is likely to be judged excellent

Transformational leadership.

Leadership is dedicated to ensuring the highest possible standard and achievement in all areas of the school's work

Transformational, transactional and instructional.

It is reflective, self-critical and innovative and articulates a clear vision of the school in the future, so that all staff know what they are working towards.

Contingent, moral, instructional and transformational.

It results in clear strategic thinking and planning for improvement. Leadership development is supported and encouraged through the school. Evaluation is embedded in the school's practice, and is open, frank and accurate.

Management, distributed, contingent and instructional.

The school is ambitious and keen to learn from best practice elsewhere. Most teaching is very effective, but leaders take steps to improve that which is not.

Instructional and transactional.

The school provides successfully for pupils who do not respond well to school or have difficulty in learning. The school

Moral and instructional.

has a deservedly high reputation.

Leadership is principled, well established and dynamic at different levels in the school.

Moral and distributed.

There is a drive for improvement and a strong sense of direction. Staff share a common purpose and make an effective contribution to the school's goals and values.

Moral, transformational and interpersonal.

Relationships are cordial and characterized by mutual respect. The school reviews its performance and evaluates systematically the effectiveness of teaching, providing feedback and support, and managing performance with commitment and integrity. The standards it achieves compare well with those of similar schools.

Interpersonal, moral, management, instructional and transactional.

Figure 8 OFSTED grade descriptors for excellent leadership practice and implied typology of leadership.

(Source of Descriptors: OFSTED 2003, Training Manual for Inspectors)

The significance of this analysis is the implication that no one model of leadership is appropriate for any particular school, rather that whilst the overriding criteria suggests a transformational leadership style the day-to-day leadership is fluid and dynamic to accommodate the changing needs, variable contexts and purposes – it infers a greater dependency on a developmental model of leadership.

Headteacher training programmes

The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) outline the five areas of leadership thought to be essential qualities for effective leadership in schools and discuss through

training, the various models of leadership that are considered fundamental ingredients of the leader's repertoire.

The NPQH was introduced in 1996 and was aimed at aspiring headteachers. The first cohort of candidates began in 1997 and by February 2000 over 6000 candidates had registered for the qualification. The first model of NPQH comprised a single standard route and could take candidates up to three years to complete. This standard route incorporated an initial needs assessment, a compulsory module on Strategic Leadership and Accountability and three option modules: Teaching and Learning, Leading and Managing Staff, and Efficient and Effective Deployment of Staff and Resources. The modules were based upon the five key areas of headship identified in the National Standards for Headteachers. Each module was assessed and candidates also had to take part in a final assessment day.

The LPSH was introduced in 1998 for headteachers with at least three years' experience of the role. The stated objectives of the programme are to raise the performance of pupils and staff in schools by enabling headteachers to develop further their leadership qualities and give them an understanding of:

- models of organisational and leadership effectiveness
- the impact of the headteacher's leadership on the school
- what highly effective headteachers do to raise standards
- the participant's own development needs
- the key issues in the participants' schools which need to be tackled in order to achieve improvement targets
- the use of information and communication technology (ICT) for personal development and school improvement planning.

LPSH is a stand-alone programme that focuses on the leadership of an individual headteacher. Its content does not take account of outcomes of previous training and it is not explicitly based on the National Standards for Headteachers. It consists of an initial

four-day workshop, during which participants identify a personal development plan and action plan, as well as school improvement targets and a school action plan. Participants have the option of being paired with a business partner (the Partners in Leadership scheme), so that leadership and management experiences can be shared. Targets identified during the initial four days are reviewed at a fifth day, 'Day 5', which takes place up to a year after the initial four-day workshop.

The implication of the NPQH and LPSH training courses is that it is possible to adopt a style of leadership or produce training packs for potential leaders that will transform headteachers and, by extension, schools. Based on the interpretation of the various typologies of leadership already discussed I suggest it would be more fruitful and pragmatic, since each school has a different cultural and societal reality and each leader is an individual with different value systems, to start from the other end of the leadership telescope by analysing the situational response of leaders in action and applying the various typologies to produce a normative referenced description of leadership in action. Rather than prescribing particular styles that leaders should adopt since no one leadership model or construct can apply in all situations.

The NPQH and LPSH approach to leadership training and leadership development is open to the criticism that it fragments and oversimplifies the requirements for headship (Bush and Glover, 2003); the approach seems to pay too little attention to the different school contexts likely to be experienced and although they provide an insight into the necessary traits needed for headship, they do not necessarily equate with the ability to modify approaches to the specific requirements of individual schools. The study by Wasserstein-Warnet and Klein (2000) into 20 Israeli schools to identify the characteristics of effective leadership showed that *"the more successful principals use*

contingent leadership” p48, requiring the ability to change perspective using a “multi-frame, pluralistic perspective and to avoid a ‘static vision’”.

In their report carried out in 2002 on the NPQH and LPSH programmes OFSTED writes:

“The quality of much of the LPSH training is good and is generally well received by headteachers. However, it does not always meet the needs of headteachers from a variety of contexts and there is no effective monitoring of the outcomes”. (OFSTED, p5)

“The various training programmes do not yet meet sufficiently the particular needs of participating headteachers, for example headteachers of schools facing particular challenges and headteachers of small rural primary schools. Monitoring of the impact of national headteacher training programmes is not well established”. (OFSTED, 2002, p6)

“The three national training programmes for headteachers are intended for individual leaders rather than leadership groups. However, inspection, headteachers’ comments and good practice in some LEAs, all indicate the need for leadership and management training to focus on leadership teams as well as on individual headteachers”. (OFSTED, p6)

The extracts seem to confirm my earlier observation that the LPSH and NPQH programmes for serving and aspiring headteachers are not sufficiently responsive to contextual backdrops, as they operate within a prescriptive rather than proactive framework. The report produced by OFSTED in 2003, on leadership and management (OFSTED, 2003) recognises these same weaknesses in recommending the key issues for the NCSL to consider in developing future training programmes. In particular, the report identifies distinguishing between leadership and management, differentiated training to meet the needs of headteachers from varying contexts, programme coherence and progression and how to evaluate the impact of leadership training on school improvement and raising standards, as key tasks.

If leadership training is to be an effective tool in preparing potential headteachers for their role, relational skills awareness (Russell, 2003) will be a necessary part of the training programme. Indeed, there is a dichotomy between the leader's need for followers to consent to their leadership on the one hand and the need to encourage followers to meet the whole organisation's goals on the other; inferring a political dimension to leadership. Consequently if leadership training has as its central focus, models of leadership and neglects interpersonal interactions between leaders within the socio-political context in which they operate, the chances of successful implementation of management initiatives is highly unlikely. Knowledge of the various leadership models will not necessarily enable the development of an effective leadership style to emerge in the absence of a concrete understanding of the players in the cultural domain of the school.

A failure to recognize the peculiar nature of schools as organisations results in an over-simplified analysis of schools on the premise that they can be fitted within a conceptual framework derived from studies of other organisations and bureaucracies (Ball, 1987). Informed outsiders have failed to take the views of the experienced actors in schools, thereby ignoring the inside knowledge that they have. The failure to accommodate contextual variations is not untypical of the conceptualisation of leadership in educational literature and repeated in the NPQH and LPSH training programmes for potential and serving headteachers, suggesting programmes that are not grounded in contextual realities.

"The NPQH does not fully explore or, indeed, address the range of leadership perspectives and has taken a simplistic view of leadership, almost as if it were a panacea for the problems facing schools today". (Milliken, 2002, p292)

The various typologies of leadership and the current training programmes for potential and serving headteachers are skewed more to theoretical than practical perspectives and yet school leaders are like politicians whose function is to shape constituency needs and expectations. They will inevitably face challenges from those constituent members who disagree with policies and practice. In discussing the paradox of school leadership Eden (1997) writes:

“Reality is defined through constant interaction in which each side tries to impose his/her own interpretation...There is never a completely uniform meaning and some followers remain ‘rebels’ and try to apply a contrary meaning to events. The leader thus succeeds in shaping reality if the contradictory interpretation is too small to threaten his/her dominance, but does not try to eliminate it totally, thus he/she is viewed as democratic”. p250

The limitations of theoretical models of leadership and training programmes for leaders is that they tend to overlook the differing interpretations of reality within schools which inevitably create barriers and produce conflict between the various micro-political groups within the organisation which may prevent effective and efficient leadership from occurring. This presents the researcher with an interesting avenue to explore both in terms of how a successful leader manages conflict resolution and the leadership limitations experienced through the cultural reality of the organisation leaders find themselves in.

Generic descriptors of transformational leadership

Whilst there are many definitions of leadership and a significant number of models of leadership, there is a current lack of understanding and supporting evidence relating to effective leadership grounded in reality (Bush & Glover, 2003) and how leaders operate on a day-to-day basis. As Eisenbach et al (1999) indicate in their research into the management of change there is a need to integrate more closely the perspectives of

leadership and the management of change if we are to understand how to effectively enact change through transformational leadership processes (p84).

“Transformational, charismatic, and visionary leaders can successfully change the status quo in their organisations by displaying the appropriate behaviors (sic) at the appropriate stage in the transformation process”. p84

Although Leithwood (1994) defines eight dimensions of transformational leadership and Bass (1995) four dimensions, the confusion, from a pragmatic perspective, is the use of the term ‘transformational leadership’ which infers a single leadership perspective.

In his seminal work on leadership however, Burns (1978) refers to *transforming leadership* in addressing the relationship between leaders and followers grounded in the needs, wants, aspirations and values of the followers. Transforming leadership produces very different connotations and meanings than ‘transformational leadership’ since it implies various leadership constructs can exist under the umbrella of transformational leadership that in their totality, by contributing to the transformational processes, enable an organisation to be transformed. Leadership has been exercised that could be described as transforming leadership embracing the multiple constructs of leadership behaviours under the umbrella of transformational leadership; suggesting a dynamic and fluid model of transforming leadership capable of reflecting the changing contexts and prevailing conditions within an organisation.

The literature on transformational leadership reflects this multidimensional perspective of transforming leadership, embracing the leadership constructs of instructional, authentic and pseudo-transformational, moral, transactional-contingent, charismatic, distributed, managerial, and interpersonal leadership. These provide powerful

normative descriptions of leadership in action and contribute to what has, I believe, been generically identified as transformational leadership.

In their paper on transactional, charismatic and transformational leadership, Popper and Zakkai (1994) suggest that analysis of leadership should relate to organisational contexts such as hierarchy, relational leadership, task orientation and contextual backdrop. Through discussion of the various psychological perspectives of the emotional bond between the leader and the led, including aspects of transference (regressive leadership) and projective and attribution explanations of how followers perceive leaders Popper and Kakkai support this view. They conclude by proposing transactional leadership is prevalent under stable organisational conditions, charismatic where there is a high anxiety level triggered by change for example and transformational where anxiety level is low and attention given to the development needs of the led. Transformational leadership is thought to be less dependent on organisational context than transactional and charismatic leadership. The implication of Popper and Kakkai's work is that an effective leader would need to have a clear knowledge and understanding of the socio-political reality of an organisation in order to use a leadership style appropriate for specific purpose. It legislates against leaders who demonstrate an inflexible approach or perceive a fixed leadership style appropriate for all occasions.

In order to understand the role of the leader in an educational setting, the various theoretical model's espoused through educational literature can be used as useful reference points to describe and classify the actions of the situational position of leaders. Consequently it is informative to review the main constructs of leadership that fall under the generic heading of 'transformational leadership'– and from these

establish frames of reference that can be used to describe the actions of leaders in the school context. It may transpire, through this analysis, that particular principles and aspects of leadership emerge as significant components of effective and efficient leadership, and lend themselves to an over-arching description of leadership that is grounded in cultural and social reality, but which has clearly defined links with theoretical models; thereby producing a template for practitioners to use in the field to describe their actions and reflect on practice.

Key constructs that underpin transformational leadership

In this section I outline the various leadership constructs that form part of the general construct called transformational leadership.

Authentic and pseudo-transformational leadership

Transformational leadership is claimed to result in followers achieving beyond expected levels of performance as a result of the leaders influence (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership was first articulated through the work of Burns (1978) in the context of political leaders and based on Weber's (1964) ideas of power and charisma. Burns saw leadership as a structure of action that engaged others in the social process of change.

Bass (1995) defined transformational leadership along the four dimensions of idealised influence, inspirational motivation, individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation. Where *idealised influence* involved being effective role models with demonstrable high moral standards; *inspirational motivation* was translated into leaders creating attractive future visions for the organisation thereby engendering enthusiasm and commitment from followers; *individualised consideration* gave close attention to

the needs and aspirations of followers and *intellectual stimulation* developed followers' capacities to higher levels by challenging assumptions and formulating innovatory solutions and new ways of looking at problems.

The most important transformational constructs according to Bass and Avolio (1997) were idealised influence and inspirational motivation, the behavioural characteristics of charisma. Although later (Bass and Steidlmeiera, 1999), used the term charisma and idealised influence interchangeably, keeping inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration as separate domains. Bass and Steidlmeiera (1999) also considered idealised influence, inspirational motivation, individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation, on the basis of ethical and moral considerations, as characteristics of authentic transformational leadership as distinct from pseudo-transformational leadership, which they defined as the type of leadership that professed to be transformational, but is not.

Under the construct of authentic transformational leadership Bass & Steidlmeiera (1999) suggested that this form of leadership was grounded in the interests of others whereas pseudo-transformational leadership, like transactional leadership was grounded in self-interest with pseudo-transformational leadership professing to place the interests of followers at the centre of their leadership actions. In authentic transformational leadership

"...one's moral obligations to them are grounded in a broader conception of individuals within community and related to social norms and cultural beliefs...is more consistent than transactional leadership with Judaic-Christian philosophical traditions and discourses on the leadership of the moral sage that pre-suppose a trusting community as the central life context".
(Bass and Steidlmeiera, 1999, p185)

Whereas pseudo-transformational leaders may see themselves as honest and straightforward and supportive of their organisation's mission, their behaviour is inconsistent and unreliable (Bass and Steidlmeiera, 1999). The pseudo-transformational leader has an outer veneer of respectability and concern for others, professing allegiance to the core purposes of the organisation but having an inner core that is not true to the organisation's stated purposes. For example, leaders resistant to change may attempt to put up an appearance of supporting change while actual behaviours remain unchanged, causing practices to remain as they were despite changes in organisational purposes.

Simons (1999) explores the same theme in his paper on behavioural integrity and transformational leadership. Where behavioural integrity is defined as the perceived degree of congruence between the values expressed by words and those expressed through actions of leaders. The point he makes, together with Bass (1995), Bycio et al., (1995), Carlson and Perrewe (1995), Yukl (1989) and others, is that trust, an integral aspect of charisma, is undermined where behavioural integrity is perceived to be under question by those being led, in turn limiting the change capacity of transformational leadership. In this context the terms pseudo-transformational (Bass and Steidlmeiera, 1999) and behavioural integrity (Simons, 1999) appear to be interchangeable, both producing a negative correlation on follower's perception of leadership effectiveness and having a significant impact on subordinate effort, commitment, satisfaction and assessment of leadership skills.

The Bass (1995) four dimensions of transformational leadership concertinas the eight dimensions of transformational leadership proposed by Leithwood (1994). In this model Leithwood (1994) included: vision, goals, modelling best practices and

organisational values, intellectual stimuli, individualised support, demonstrating high performance and expectations, productive school culture and participation in school decision making. Whilst the Bass (1995) model contains obvious areas of overlap with the Leithwood (1994) model, for example intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration, idealised influence and inspirational motivation appear to have compacted the six other domains of the Leithwood (1994) model to produce the generic domains proposed by the Bass (1995) model.

Studies into transformational leadership show a positive correlation to employee satisfaction (Bass and Avolio, 1993) and empower followers to act by providing a vision for the future rather than through rewards and punishments (Bennis and Nanus, 1985). Transformational leaders seek to engage the support of teachers for their vision for the school and to enhance their capacities to contribute to goal achievement (Bush and Glover, 2003). The dynamics of transformational leadership involve followers having a strong personal identification with the leader, a shared vision for the future, and working collectively for the benefit of the group.

Leaders manifest idealized influence when they make improvements in performance by participating in risks with their followers, maintain consistency in their behaviour, and are dependable. Through inspirational motivation, leaders bring meaning and purpose to the work being done, and introduce challenges and maintain motivation. Charisma, a process where leaders arouse followers by being visionary, motivational and powerful, confident and captivating their followers (Bass, 1985), is the sum of inspirational motivation and idealized influence. Leaders who display charismatic leadership are able to use expressive language that is emotionally appealing and communicate a clear vision that is related to the needs and values of followers. Leaders display intellectual

stimulation when they help their followers develop new ideas, motivating them to take alternative routes to problem solving and take a closer look at all possible solutions. Individualized consideration occurs when leaders pay individual attention to their followers, providing support and acting as coach.

Instructional leadership

Instructional leadership has a number of broad definitions ranging from developing effective working environments for teachers and pupils (Greenfield, 1987), to promoting the school's mission through the school's instructional programme (Calabrese, 1991) and in terms of activities the principal takes to promote student learning (De Bevoise, 1984). Whilst acknowledging instructional leadership as an element of transformational leadership, Leithwood (1992) considers it too limited in scope for whole school developments because its central focus lies with classrooms and classroom practice and performance. Bush and Glover (2003) locate instructional leadership in teaching and learning and the behaviour of teachers working with students to promote student learning, limiting in its sphere of influence in terms of holistic organizational structures and developments.

In the first empirical report on teachers' perspectives of how principals promote teaching and learning, Blase and Blase (2000) identified two major dimensions, reflective practices and professional development, as key components in effective instructional leadership. Breaking these down further, for effective instructional leadership they identified collaboration, peer coaching, inquiry, collegial study groups and reflective discussion as enabling the development of teaching and learning knowledge that could be applied to classroom practice. Under 'talking strategies' Blase and Blase, located five areas where principals, through their actions, promote effective

dialogue with teachers; these included, making suggestions, giving feedback, modelling, using inquiry and giving praise. The outcomes of the research, and the implications it has for principal training programmes, was based on the analysis of 800 American teachers to an open-ended questionnaire that was designed to elicit the characteristics of principals that enhanced classroom practice and instruction.

“In sum, talking with teachers to promote reflection and promoting professional growth are the two major dimensions of effective instructional leadership, as reported by teachers”. p137

The report suggests that the instructional leadership of the principal is perceived by teacher's as impacting on their practice although there appear to be some limitations within the research that leave it open to criticism.

The first concerns the form of the open-ended question given to the research sample of teachers. They were invited to provide an indication of one characteristic of the principal with whom they worked that had a *positive impact* on their classroom teaching, requesting descriptions of the effect. The difficulty with this lies in the definition of what is meant by *positive impact* and the differing interpretations that would be placed on similar instructional paradigms in different educational contexts and through individualised social constructs and cognitive capabilities.

Secondly whilst the respondents were able, through their individualised constructs to identify positive impact characteristics of the principal and to describe the way they perceived these had impacted on practice, the research does not make clear whether the positive impact produced measurable improvements in pupil outcomes.

The thirdly, Blase and Blase judge effective instructional leadership in terms of developing professional dialogue amongst educators (p137), by this it is assumed they

mean teachers. Whilst it may be generally acknowledged that professional dialogue is a worthy and useful dimension to life in schools, it does not follow that through it, improvements in achievement and performance are made. Yet the imperative of effective instructional leadership I would argue must result in improved performance at the pupil level since the prime function of schools is concerned with teaching and learning.

The case for a broader instructional leadership definition and perspective

The prescriptive nature of the construct of instructional leadership that locates it firmly within teaching and learning limits its usefulness in describing the broader range of staff competencies and capacities necessary for transforming processes to occur; its definition is too narrow. In order that followers are able to embrace transforming leadership and vision to become an ingrained aspect of the school culture, it is a precondition that followers demonstrate a practical understanding and comprehension of the strategies necessary to bring about change. This implies the existence of appropriate competencies and where they are not evident, an instructional paradigm that enables them to be developed through capacity development. The traditional perspective of instructional leadership that limits its focus to teaching and learning overlooks the wider competencies that contributes to the broader aspects of transforming schools.

For example, the leader of a transforming school may wish to develop other leaders by embracing distributive practices and creating professional development opportunities. To achieve this objective it may be necessary to develop a range of competencies so that potential leaders become effective leaders. For instance, subject leaders would require specific competencies related to curriculum development, strategic planning,

target setting, assessment, monitoring and evaluation, data interpretation and team building. Having identified the range of competencies appropriate for the specific leadership position within the school a headteacher/principal would implement an instructional programme to address the needs identified; demonstrating instructional leadership that, whilst not directly associated with classroom practice, impacts indirectly through the increased levels of competency of nominated leaders within the organisation of the school. Increasing levels of competency ultimately would lead to increased capacity of the organisation to embrace change and development.

The development of followers' capacities to higher levels, and elevating follower goals, necessitates an instructional process, where instructional infers a broader definition than usually understood. Davies (2002) suggests that leaders have a responsibility for developing a range of core competencies so that as new challenges occur the school is in a position to respond by drawing on the core competencies. For example, he includes understanding of learning and differentiation, using data effectively, respecting and valuing pupils and staff as core competencies. The key therefore, for the transforming leader, is to identify the core competencies, determine those in place already and those that need further development and refinement, hence defining a capacity development programme specific to particular contextual settings.

Transformational leaders create a dynamic organisational vision that often necessitates a metamorphosis in cultural values to reflect greater innovation (Özaralli, 2003) and this points towards a flexible and coherent instructional programme that attends to cultural needs and teacher competencies at all levels. The instructional leader, if perceived as the primary source of knowledge for development, has the responsibility of ensuring effective instructional programmes are constructed and delivered to meet

the varying competency levels within the school. The role must embrace not only teaching and learning, but also the wider management and leadership issues integral to effective schools. As Sheppard (1996) articulates on the traditional definition of instructional leadership:

"The narrow definition focuses on instructional leadership as a separate entity from administration. In the narrow view, instructional leadership is defined as those actions that are directly related to teaching and learning – observable behaviours such as classroom supervision. In the broad view, instructional leadership entails all leadership activities that affect student learning". p326

This sentiment was echoed by Southworth (2002) who argues that instructional leadership is likely to be more effective when it is conceptualised as 'broad' rather than 'narrow' because it increases the scope for other leaders to play a role as well as the principal/headteacher and because it recognises how social organisations operate in practice.

The implication of this view of instructional leadership is the difficulties that may occur if the positional leader of a school demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding themselves. This limited knowledge suggests Hill (2001), has important implications for leadership training programmes. Programmes should aim to identify weaknesses that would limit the scope and effectiveness of the instructional leadership of potential leaders and ensure that leadership programmes remedy any shortfall identified.

In discussing building capacity for a learning community, Mitchell and Sackney (2001) identify the necessary conditions for a learning community to evolve, making the point that a learning community embraces both pupils and teachers. The key areas they identify as building capacity, building interpersonal capacity and building

organisational capacity and whilst they make no reference to instructional leadership there are implications and analogies that can be made.

“...the development of a learning community comes about through the interplay among personal abilities, interpersonal relationships, and organizational structures. Growth occurs as personal, interpersonal, and organizational capacities increase; it is limited as they decrease”. (p2)

Building personal capacity entails the deconstruction of one's personal narrative that shapes professional practice and reconstruction through professional learning and reflective practices – similar to the processes identified by Blase and Blase (2000). The construction of personal knowledge and competencies is perceived as both an individual and group pursuit resulting in the development of interpersonal capacity – this takes the practitioner out of the isolation of the classroom construct and over time teachers internalise the expectations and norms that have developed within the school.

An instructional leadership paradigm that has as one of its foci the development of teams and cross-curricular linkages would enable the development of interpersonal capacity. Organisational capacity is concerned with the structures that enable continuing professional development and the development of community leaders so that hierarchical levels are reduced and power is dispersed throughout the school. There is a case for arguing that instructional leadership in its broadest sense is concerned with the competency development of staff and nurturing potential leaders and concurs with the model for capacity building described by Mitchell and Sackney (2001).

“The notion of the school as a learning community represents a fundamental shift in the ideology that shapes the understanding of schools and of professional practice, one that is grounded in a wholeness worldview and that is associated with a constructivist epistemology and an interpretive methodology. This worldview positions schools and learning as generative

rather than instrumental, inasmuch as learning is an organic aspect of the human condition and schools are structured to facilitate human learning, regardless of the direction that the learning takes. It foregrounds the notion that, through their interaction patterns and organizational structures, people construct dominant organizational narratives that henceforth shape thinking and learning and limit professional practice and discourse. Interpretive methodologies work to expose and to critique those narratives so that, if necessary, they can be modified to honour the generative nature of learning". (Mitchell and Sackney, 2001, p11)

In summary, instructional leadership is limited in its effectiveness if it is primarily located within the domain of teaching and learning. A more useful construct than instructional leadership would be capacity development that embraces all levels and avenues within the school organisation so that the competencies and capacities of all teachers are developed through instructional programmes that take cognisance of professional needs, is commensurate with the schools' vision and aims, recognises potential leaders and their specific competency requirements, accommodates a teaching and learning dimension, embodies a range of instructional strategies and, acknowledges that delivery is not solely the prerogative of the positional leader but can be delegated to those having the appropriate knowledge and skills. In their discourse on professional development in UK secondary schools, Brown et al (2002) make similar points with reference to heads of departments when they write:

"Willingness and ability to develop a sense of common purpose and facilitate joint action towards mutual goals are critical dimensions of leadership which are desperately needed in schools that must function within the contexts of today's dynamic environment. Heads of department must understand leadership as a process and schools as organisations; must develop the human relation skills needed to facilitate joint action and must manage change for the continual improvement of school effectiveness and pupil teaching and learning". p40

Instructional programmes that embrace the professional development of middle managers or other potential leaders in the school will be better equipped to respond to

change, than those schools who perceive middle manager roles as administrative exercises or instructional leadership as concerned only with teaching and learning.

In conclusion, a strong case can be made for linking effective instructional leadership with the capacity of an organisation to embrace transforming practices and become a learning organisation. It is through effective capacity development that change can be sustained, emerging leaders identified and organisations be transformed. The narrow perspective that identifies instructional leadership only in the teaching and learning domain limits its effectiveness as an organisational transforming agent.

Moral and Spiritual leadership

It is the leader's beliefs, values, vision and action that set the tone and standard for organizations (Banerji and Krishnan, 2000) and forms a subset of transformational leadership which Bush (1978) considered as addressing the real needs of followers and termed moral leadership.

"This last concept, moral leadership, concerns me the most. By this term I mean, first, that leaders and led have a relationship not only of power but of mutual needs, aspirations, and values: second, that in responding to leaders, followers have adequate knowledge of alternative leaders and programs and the capacity to choose among these alternatives; and, third, that leaders take responsibility for their commitments – if they promise certain kinds of economic, social, and political change, they assume leadership in the bringing about of that change. Moral leadership is not mere preaching, or uttering of pieties, or the insistence on social conformity. Moral leadership emerges from, and always returns to, the fundamental wants and needs, aspirations, and values of the followers. I mean the kind of leadership that will produce social change that will satisfy followers' authentic needs". (p4)

The moral construct of leadership is not new. Schrag (1979) pre-empted many of the issues articulated over the next twenty years, when he identified four dimensions of moral leadership (a moral agent) that would impact on leadership practice. Firstly, a leader should base decisions and actions on principles that are transparent and

consistently applied across all contexts. Secondly, the moral agent should take cognisance of the welfare and interests of all who will be affected by the leader's decisions and actions. Thirdly, decisions taken by a moral agent should be based on complete knowledge of the information/facts surrounding the issue and fourthly, a moral agent's moral judgements should be prescriptive, that is following examination of evidence and information concerning an issue, the actions taken should be consistent with the moral agent's value and belief system. Inconsistency would suggest the moral agent's failure to take moral obligations seriously.

In their definitions of transformational leadership Bass (1985) considered it to be a form of leadership that motivated people to do more than they originally expected to and in this sense represented moral leadership that worked towards the benefit and growth of followers rather than satisfying the needs of self. By definition, transactional leadership could not be moral leadership since it is concerned with exchange mechanisms geared to satisfying wants and organisational goals, whilst transformational leadership is a form of moral/spiritual leadership since this appeals to the higher ideals and ethics of followers to transcend their immediate needs for the sake of the achievement of the organisations vision and aspirations.

Moral leadership assumes that the critical focus of leadership are the values and ethics of the leaders themselves and the work of Gold et al (2003) show that outstanding leaders articulate and demonstrate clear values and beliefs that underpin the work that they do. Bush and Glover (2003) conclude that moral leadership provides the school with a clear sense of purpose with an approach, which is similar to transformational leadership, but with a stronger value base, that may be spiritual. In addressing the meaning of moral leadership, Greenfield (2004) formulates a two-pronged response,

the first in terms of the moral responsibility of schools to educate children and the second, in terms of the relationships among the people at the centre of the work of the school arguing that at the very axis of the leadership relationship is an essential moral consideration: leading and teaching to what ends, and by what means? (p174) Considered in this context, moral leadership is concerned with empowering teachers to lead and teach in environments that continually change and develop.

The moral discourse exercised by leaders is concerned with right/wrong, good/bad, should/ought and good/evil. Whilst authentic leadership is constructed in terms of the leader being a moral agent within an organisation it also points to a possible tension between followers and leaders where there is limited congruence between the ethical and moral ideals of the leader and followers. This tension creates a dilemma for the authentic transformational leader since the moral obligations to followers are grounded in the conception of individuals within community and related social norms and cultural beliefs and yet these may be at variance to the norms and beliefs the leader perceives the organisation should adopt in the furtherance of organisational goals and aspirations. This raises the question to what extent can an authentic transformational leadership construct hold true if followers are coerced into accepting new moral frameworks in the process abandoning individually held beliefs and values.

The dichotomy suggests that it is impossible for the state of authentic leadership to exist since there is an expectation that followers will aspire to and emulate the moral frameworks of the leader. Ideally, according to the principles underpinning the construct of authentic leadership, motivation should grow out of authentic inner commitment and not through coercion and persuasion. Conger and Kanungo (1998) point to this moral dilemma when they discuss their concerns about self-serving

leaders, which they argue could result in deception and exploitation of followers – narcissism, authoritarianism, flawed vision, need for power – and the promotion among followers of dependency, and lack of internalisation of values and beliefs.

To succeed in achieving the vision of an organisation, Martin and Sims (1956) and Bailey (1988) assert that within the authentic transformational construct, leaders may have to be manipulative at those times when they judge it to be for the common good. The distinguishing feature of pseudo-transformational leadership they argue is the frequency with which manipulation is used as a leadership tool, being a frequent process in pseudo-transformational leadership. A number of questions arise from this. Are the degrees of authentic leadership dependent on the frequency with which coercion is used? At what stage does authentic leadership become pseudo-transformational leadership? Is the moral agency of the authentic transformational leader compromised when coercive or manipulative techniques are deployed for the good of the organisation? Is authentic transformational leadership an achievable construct of leadership other than through a theoretical perspective?

A robust argument in which transformational leadership is seen as a variant of transactional leadership is made by Allix (2000), claiming that it is anti-democratic and based on an emotionally charged ideological exchange with a focus on domination rather than education. Allix bases this on the premise that leaders initiate change by exploiting conflict and tension within a persons' value structures, implying a form of moral elitism where the leader has a monopoly on moral truth, knowledge and wisdom, which they exploit to draw followers up to their own perceived ethical standards. The leader derives a vision or ideology from a personal theory of reality that is fallible and where followers are denied the opportunity to evaluate and test the proffered version of

reality. Which Allix argues, could in certain instances lead to a form of despotic leadership and social organisation and control, citing Hitler as a specific example of a despotic leader.

"In this process, the subjective and intrinsic end-values and goals of leaders become the objective social standards of others to meet". p15

In order to mobilise followers towards this ideological outcome, transformational leaders use inducement, persuasion, frustration, gratification, appeal, inspiration and influence articulated through charisma, heroism and ideology. Inherent in this are the seeds of psychological manipulation. Although the arguments have a certain degree of resonance and expose the weaknesses of the theoretical construct of transformational leadership, casting doubts on the explicit and implicit assumptions made by Burns (1978), it fails to provide a solution as to how vision is formulated or tease out the mediating effects of the social interactions between leaders and followers and, in the case of school organisations, the influence of externally set targets and accountability structures.

Spirituality and leadership

The term 'spirituality' has gained greater currency in organizations and management development circles and its impact on practice and leadership over recent years (Howard, 2002). Spirituality is a difficult term to define since it is highly personalised and open to individual interpretation but generally centres on finding the meaning and purpose of life and encompasses personal philosophies towards life, values, conduct and practice. As people spend significant parts of their life in the workplace, issues concerning spirituality are arising as people begin to question the purpose of their lives in the context of their working environment. Spirituality in the context of work does

not require taking a religious position, although it does not preclude discussions of spirituality with reference to the sacred or divine.

"Spirituality is claimed as the essence of everyday events. It is both the source of our restless search and the pathway to our connection and purpose. It provides a route to finding the strength and energy we need to live a life of personal fulfilment and integrity". (Howard, p236)

The implications for transformational leadership are significant where transformational leadership involves commitment to broad visionary ideals which transcend self-interest and energises followers to break with human constraints, appealing to followers' spiritual realm, based on meaning and purpose, rather than reward and punishment to ensure compliance with a visualised ideal. Building on the organisation's vision as a foundation for inspiration, transformational leaders emphasise emotional arousal over intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985). Followers, inspired by the vision, expend energy through actions in situations with minimal rewards in the conventional transactional exchange sense; that is, actions governed by doing the right thing, irrespective of personal cost or sacrifice, a spiritual response that transcends self and provides self-motivation. Spirituality is internalised as a form of intrinsic motivation and enacted as a 'flow experience', defined by Csikszentmihalyi (1978) as the inner feeling people experience, an optimal experience often associated with situations at work.

"...inspired work behaviours occur without a conscious choice, and what sustains them are stimuli inherent in the activity rather than incentives derived from a goal". p209

The implication is that by invoking spirituality through an articulated vision, transforming leadership engenders intrinsic motivation and commitment to the organisation that transcends self and moves away from the traditional transactional exchanges in return for commitment and compliance. At this level of commitment, individuals have internalised the vision, values and beliefs of the organisation and act

instinctively in accordance with those values without resorting to information processing (Dehler and Welsh, 1994); value congruence has been achieved. In the words of Bass (1985) followers have been motivated to do more than they originally expected to do through moral transforming leadership, to which I would add that spiritual leadership forms part of the moral construct of transformational leadership.

A clearly and consistently communicated vision serves as a starting point for spiritually inspired action, itself an essential aspect of energising the organisation, operationalized through transforming leadership. A vision that bridges the present to an idealised future state of the organisation inculcating a shared perspective that transcends compliance but becomes a force in people's inner-self that appeals to followers' spiritual dimensions, based on meaning and purpose, rather than enforced compliance.

"Employees perform most energetically, creatively and enthusiastically when they believe they are contributing to a purpose that is larger than themselves". (McKnight, 1984, p142)

In the school context, inspired action is translated through actions where teachers take on responsibilities over and above those contractually agreed. For example, organising and running extra-curricular activities, chairing and belonging to working parties, volunteering to substitute for an absent colleague, attending and supporting school performances, organising school trips and holidays for pupils, running revision classes during holiday periods or many of the other varied and voluntary activities associated with schools.

Spiritual leadership, according to Fairholm (1996), is built on the three foundation stones of moral leadership, stewardship, and community. Stewardship is seen in terms of the equality of power sharing and organisational governance where individuals take responsibility without the constraint of control behaviours, knowing through the vision

what is best for followers and the organisation. Leaders create co-operative, action orientated communities that, in turn, provide the environment and culture that can operate from a sense of spirituality and where members of the community operate out of a shared vision, beliefs and values and are engaged in continuous learning and development. Parallels could be drawn between stewardship and distributed leadership and community/moral leadership and the domains identified with transformational leadership.

“Spiritual leaders are moral leaders. Moral leaders prefer not to compromise, accommodate, or collaborate in areas where their core values are at stake”. p13

Spirituality encapsulates the hidden yen for the need to find meaning and purpose for our life, including those associated with our working environment. It is concerned with the interconnectedness with the world in which we live and includes emotions such as truth, love, service, insight, ecstasy, amity and completeness, and raising one's self-awareness and concord with others. Transformational leadership is a form of moral leadership that places the interests of other before self, transcending ephemeral needs for the long-term collective good of the whole, raising expectations and aspirations of followers to a higher spiritual plane that inspires others towards certain ends or purposes that go beyond self. The spiritual dimension of transforming leadership provides an intrinsic sense of purpose that acts as a vehicle for self-motivation, igniting the fire within, and creating an exothermic release of energy and commitment.

“Spirit has been defined as ‘an animating life force’, an energy that inspires one towards certain ends or purposes that go beyond self”. (McKnight, 1984, p142)

Transactional - contingent leadership

Transactional leadership is leadership in which relationships with teachers are based upon an exchange for some valued resource. The visionary, role modelling and team building leadership through the transformational-transactional model was first articulated by Burns (1978) and later modified by Bass (1985). Whilst transformational leadership builds on values and beliefs, inspiring followers to achieve more than they imagined, transactional leadership concentrates on compliance through appealing to the needs and aspirations of individuals. Transformational leadership behaviours go beyond transactional leadership and motivate followers to identify with the leader's vision and sacrifice their self-interest for that of the group or the organisation. Transactional leadership emphasises clarification of goals, follower compliance through incentives and rewards, with a focus on task completion (Bass, 1995). Transactional leadership may enable organisations to operate effectively and efficiently, but, alone, it could not develop in followers the level of trust, loyalty and enthusiasm generated by transformational leadership (Silins and Murray-Harvey, 1999).

Three behavioural constructs identify transactional leadership. The first is contingent reward, where interaction between followers and leaders involves an exchange. The second is management by exception (active), where leaders monitor to make sure mistakes are not made. The third is management by exception (passive), where leaders only intervene when things go wrong. A non-leader construct, *laissez-faire* leadership, which reflects the absence of leadership and intervention, is also included in this model. Under contingent reward, members of staff engage in an exchange process in achieving organisational goals and satisfying individual needs, whereas management

by exception (passive or active) it is argued does not necessarily inspire workers to achieve more than maintenance of the status quo.

“Where transformational leadership recognizes individual talents and builds enthusiasm through appeals to emotions, values and belief systems, transactional leadership promotes compliance by appealing to the needs and wants of individuals”. (Sarros and Santora, 2001, p388)

In this sense Sarros & Santora (2001) perceive contingent reward as based on a reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers, where achievement of specific organisational goals or levels of performance result in an exchange process where individual needs are addressed or met by the organisation or individual leaders within the organisation. Considerable scope is afforded leaders within an organisation to manoeuvre and manipulate personnel in particular directions in order to meet specific targets within the organisational strategic plan and thereby, over time, influence the cultural construct. Conversely, followers may manipulate the exchange process to service their own immediate needs without feeling any particular long-term obligation or commitment to the organization's values or beliefs. Leadership by compliance is fundamentally different to leadership through the shared understanding of the value systems and moral framework of transformational leadership.

Management-by-exception leaders take action only when there is evidence of something not going according to plan. Active management-by-exception leaders actively seek variations from expectations, and take actions as appropriate, whereas passive management-by-exception leaders intervene only when specific problems become apparent. Followers of management-by-exception leaders tend to avoid initiating change and risk taking, preferring instead to maintain the status quo (Bass, 1985). Organisational stagnation is an inherent risk associated with managers-of-exception leaders since followers are not inspired by this type of leadership to achieve

beyond expected outcomes and provided targets are met complacency can become inbuilt. Additionally where a manager is responsible for a team of employees contracted to achieve specific outcomes there may be a tendency to ignore shortfalls in performance since this may reflect, in the eyes of the manager, on his/her own management ability and consequential judgements made about his/her performance by sub-ordinates. The manager may inadvertently condone the status quo or slight variations from it, stifle initiative, growth and development by playing safe through non-interventionist tactics, rationalised by the philosophy that says 'if its not broke, why fix it?'

"Australian executives probably don't communicate poor performance well. They tend to gloss over or to mumble communication of performance that is not satisfactory and then take a very quick reaction to poor performance by terminating people without due consideration for a process of improvement".
(Leon Daphne, Managing Director, Nissan Australia, quoted in Sarros and Santoro, 2001, p389)

Leithwood (1994) considers contingent leadership a measure of how well leaders are able to respond and accommodate changes in organisational circumstances, providing a model suited to the uniqueness of differing contextual and cultural settings. Yukl (2002) supports this view in asserting that the complexity of organisations legislate against a 'one model' fits all and points out that effective leaders are those who can continuously interpret and evaluate varying contexts and adapt their leadership behaviour accordingly, advocating a more fluid and dynamic model of leadership.

The dilemma in the transformational-transactional leadership continuum model is at what stage does authentic leadership become manipulation through the transactional processes? The economic exchange (Cardona, 2000) relationship is often regulated by an employment contract that specifies the contractual obligations of the parties to the contract. Leading to extrinsic rewards for specified performance targets, rather than

intrinsic rewards epitomised by enhanced learning experiences, increased levels of autonomy or challenge equated more with the social exchange process and aligned with transforming leadership. Social exchange processes create greater degrees of professional development, possibly leading to levels of motivation that transcends self-interest leading to motives that are more altruistic, for the good of the organisation, not self; essentially moving towards the transformational end of the transformational-transactional continuum.

"The transformational leader is not the opposite of the transactional leader; it is an enriched transactional leader". (Cardona, p205)

There are inherent dangers in the transformational-transactional leadership construct since at what point does a leader change from being transformational to being manipulative? Cardona (2000) suggests that the transcendental leader aligns through trust rather than manipulation and argues that the transcendental leader, as well as being interested in the results and in aligning the motivations of followers with those of the organisation, also tries to develop the transcendent motivation of followers. That is, followers who perceive the transactional exchange processes, both economic and social, as being ultimately related to follower needs, motivation and the congruence between their values and that of the organisation.

"Transcendental leaders are not so much concerned about the collaborator's buying-in their vision, as they are to reach-out to their collaborator's needs and development". p205

In their research into transformational leadership and learning orientation, Coad and Berry (1998) mapped out the correlation between perceived transformational leadership variables (individualised consideration, intellectual stimulus, inspirational motivation, idealised influence) and perceive management-by-exception variables (management-by-exception and contingent reward) with performance orientation and

learning orientation. Individuals with a learning orientation being those concerned with increasing their competence and having an intrinsic interest in their work. Whilst those displaying performance orientation characteristics mainly concerned with achieving positive evaluations from superiors and being judged able in terms of outperforming others or achieving success with little effort.

The outcome of the research, based on 202 respondents from the accounting profession, showed positive correlations between the transformational variables and the subjects' learning orientation and negatively correlated for management-by-exception but positively correlated for contingent reward. Conversely management-by-exception was positively correlated for performance orientation but negatively for learning orientation. Coad and Berry (1998) concluded that the responses suggest there may be marked and significant differences to the consequence of leadership style and that for a learning organisation or community the preferred style of leadership should be transformational rather than transactional.

From transactional to transformational leadership

Over recent years, there has been a shift in emphasis in school leadership from transactional to transformational leadership, where transactional leadership has been viewed by Sergiovanni (1990) and others as essentially leadership through the exchange process whereby the needs of the leader are traded in return for meeting the needs of those being led, in a manner very similar to exchange theory. Transactional leadership contrasts sharply with transformational leadership, which is concerned with uniting the organisation in the pursuit of whole school goals through ownership of a shared vision, underpinned by common value systems. The polarization of these extreme ends of the leadership continuum presents an interesting challenge for the

researcher to differentiate and identify outcomes that can be attributed to either style of leadership. It is my view that transactional and transformational leadership are inexorably linked, one cannot exist in isolation to the other – but further research is needed in this area.

Ann Hart in her paper on leader succession (Hart, 1991) gives some indication that for successful integration into a school, the new-comer would need to be aware of social and cultural nuances and adopt strategies that enabled successful integration, often through negotiation and exchange, so that desired changes to the culture of the school can be brought about. Through negotiation – essentially the exchange process – agreement and consensus can be achieved.

As Hart states:

“Case studies of principal succession provide compelling anecdotal evidence that inattention to social norms in a new context may trip up a successor, even the most experienced and successful principal with laudable goals”.
p457

The implication for leaders in school is significant – especially for those who have only recently been appointed and whose initial legitimised authority is solely positional.

“An inability to take sufficient notice of the existing organisational context may partly explain the recent failure of some so-called ‘superheads’, called in to turn around ‘failing schools’. – relational awareness cannot be seen as an optional concern for leaders”. (Russell, 2003 p154)

Although Russell and Hart recognise the need for effective professional socialization through the interrelationship of the individual and the group, and organizational socialization if a new leader is to make a successful transition into the school culture, Miskel & Cosgrove (1985) recognise succession as a disruptive event that changes the line of communication, realigns relationships of power, affects decision-making and

generally disturbs the equilibrium of normal activities. For any school it represents an important influence on the social dynamics of the organisation.

The idealised transformational state envisioned by Burns (1978) is unrealisable and will remain a theoretical aspiration modulated by human interactions and character sets that populate organisations. Transactional processes can temper and change some of the characteristics so that through compliance, organisations are moved further along the road to the transformational ideal, even though it may remain an elusive objective. For this reason the route from transactional to transformational leadership can never be completed since transactional leadership, micro-political manipulation in all but name, will always be part of the background noise accompanying transforming leadership.

Indeed, transactional leadership by definition is a form of transforming leadership with its routes in personalities, needs and personal aspirations, providing a balancing act between these and the needs and aspirations of the organisation. Transactional leadership can be succinctly described in terms of an exchange contract where both sides of the equation are satisfied, but it doesn't follow that over time either party will not renege on the exchange deal that has been struck. Transformational leadership has, it is argued, the potential to be despotic, as leaders live out their values and belief systems through manipulation and coercion of followers on the back of rhetoric, charisma and visionary claims. It could be argued that this is just a hybrid form of the exchange mechanism, transactional leadership.

Managerial leadership

The managerial leadership model assumes that leaders focus on functions, tasks and behaviours and that the activities/behaviours of the organisation are rationalised by

organisational outcomes and linked closely to positional authority and organisational hierarchy (Leithwood et al, 1999). Bush (1986) also links this type of leadership with formal positions in hierarchical organisations and the rationalisation of actions in pursuing agreed aims and objectives. The six managerial functions of supervision, input, behaviour, output, selection and environment identified by Myers and Murphy (1995) lend further support to the concept of positional authority and organisational hierarchy within the context of managerial leadership, symptomatic of a formal model of management.

In the context of transformational leadership, traditional views of management, with its implied hierarchical, top-down approach, centralised control and entrenched values of stability and security, is an anachronism. The transformational construct, together with more distributive practices and shared ownership, points towards a flatter management structure in which the boundaries are less clearly defined, elastic, fluid and permeable. Traditional authoritarianism, where senior managers exercise command and control, would under a transforming leadership style be displaced, removing traditional hierarchical structures to make way for more loosely coupled systems characterised by cooperation, collaboration, teamwork, communication and individualism. Under traditional hierarchical management constructs whilst compliance may be achieved, commitment to organisational goals may be superficial, determined more through sanctions rather than rewards.

Management is not the same as leadership, although managers have the capacity to demonstrate leadership qualities. Within the transformational framework, managers are essential for the implementation of policies and procedures and the smooth running of the day-to-day affairs of the school, they are concerned with the technical rational

operational aspects of school policy. Leadership is concerned with developing people and changing organisations whilst management is embedded in technical rationality, being primarily concerned with systems and the implementation of strategic action plans. Transactional leadership processes are more aligned to management, whereas transformational processes to leadership.

“Management is the implementation of school policies and the efficient and effective maintenance of the school’s current activities. Both leadership and management are required if schools are to be successful”. (Bush and Glover, 2003, p10)

Management according to Cuban (1988) is concerned with maintenance rather than change, whereas leadership is concerned with moving the organisation towards new visions through transforming practices. Operationally the management process occurs through interpersonal relationships sometimes involving transactional exchanges and elements of transforming leadership. The fact that managers are involved in planning, organising, directing and controlling the work of other teachers presents the inherent danger that they may covertly undermine the leadership of the school and its agreed vision through misuse of the power vested in the managerial role to subjugate employees to the demands of the organisation, particularly where there is minimal congruence between an individuals values and beliefs and those of the organisation articulated through its vision. Management however, must of necessity form a sub-set of transforming leadership, since it is through the management processes that strategic action plans are implemented and the day-to-day organisational aspects of running a school carried out. By itself, a purely managerial based leadership paradigm would not motivate followers but merely ensure compliance and maintenance of the status quo.

Interpersonal leadership

Interpersonal leadership is concerned with the on-going relationships between teachers and students, leading to a collaborative approach and leadership that has a moral dimension. West-Burnham (2001) stresses the importance of collaboration and interpersonal relationships and Tuohy and Coghlan (1997) highlight the intensity of relationships within a school context and how these impact on responses and actions at a personal and academic level. The interpersonal leadership theme is expanded by the research of Johnston and Pickersgill (1992) in which they suggest that in the stress-filled, rarefied atmosphere of leadership, interpersonal relations can mediate the pressures and stresses associated with the work that school leaders undertake. Effective interpersonal leadership involves having advanced personal skills that enable leaders to operate effectively with both internal and external stakeholders (Bush and Glover, 2003).

The majority of a headteacher's time is spent in interpersonal interactions with a variety of individuals; the nature of these interactions tending to be fragmented and diverse. Research shows that school administrators (headteachers) spend 80% of their day interacting at an interpersonal level with a range of people (Peterson, 1982) where the majority of the interactions are unrelated to the technical core of schooling (Deal and Celotti, 1980; Weick, 1982; Pitner and Ogawa, 1980). The importance of interpersonal interactions on organisational effectiveness has been researched by Argyris (1962) and Graen et al (1977) who drew the conclusion that effective interpersonal relations between superiors and subordinates improves organisational effectiveness and the quality of working life of the subordinates. Effective interpersonal leadership depends on the style and level of communication between the headteacher and those associated with the school, staff, parents, pupils and other

agencies; Khetarpal and Srivastava (2000) suggest that a skilled headteacher is able to structure interactions effectively through recognising the verbal and non-verbal cues, marshalling them into purposeful sequences, and steering interactions towards a clear objective (p74).

“They know how, both their own frame of reference and that of others, color what is perceived and assumed to be real; how attitudes, beliefs, opinions and values affect behaviour and learning; and how needs and aspirations shape an individual’s investment of her/his energies”. p75

They argue that headteachers who are able to reflect on their own interpersonal behaviour create opportunities for staff and pupils to realise their individual capabilities in the face of rapidly changing demands of growth and job satisfaction; concluding that the more highly developed the interpersonal skills of the headteacher, the greater the performance of the school.

Analysis of transformational, transactional and instructional leadership all point to a common requirement for effective levels of communication between the leader and followers – they subsume within their construct the implied development of interpersonal skills. Where a leader is unable to articulate with conviction and personal commitment the vision, or enter into constructive dialogues with personnel or convey meaning and provide support through instructional processes, leaders are unlikely to manage change effectively. The term interpersonal leadership as a paradigm relating to a particular leadership style is somewhat misleading; it is less of a leadership style than a quality or attribute of the leader. Being an effective communicator or an expert in interpersonal interactions whilst being antecedents for the development of productive personal relationships within an organization, are by themselves, unlikely to be

transforming agents in the absence of clearly defined strategic intentions and a purposeful educational rationale for change.

For example in the four behavioural constructs identifying transactional leadership (Bass, 1985), a non-leader construct, *laissez-faire* leadership, which reflects the absence of leadership and intervention, is also included in the model. The *laissez-faire* leader may have excellent interpersonal skills and relationships with followers, but in the absence of clear educational direction and intervention, is unlikely to produce change within the organisation, albeit those interpersonal relations are exemplary.

Traditionally, managers and leaders in schools have focused on the technical or operational structures for implementation of agreed action plans. However, to be effective leaders in an environment of change and flux, the interpersonal dimension becomes critical (Goleman, 1998; Javidan, 1995). In addition Graetz (2000), suggest that change leadership involves two roles: instrumental and charismatic. Where instrumental leadership is primarily concerned with the technical operational knowledge and charismatic leadership is personalised leadership underpinned by strong interpersonal skills. Key dimensions of the charismatic role include, inspiring a shared vision through personally communicating the future direction, empowering and building teams through tangible support and resources, recognising and rewarding success, modelling the way and communicating the message repeatedly to ensure momentum and enthusiasm for change. The charismatic dimension having clear connections with transformational leadership construct.

The research carried out by Graetz (2000) involved looking closely at three international organisations, Pilkington, Ford and Ericsson; and how change had been

effectively managed through the organisation. The case study observations indicated that successfully sustaining the momentum for organisation-wide change demanded a long-term strategic approach, incorporating strategy, structure, systems and technology (instrumental leadership role); and values, behaviours and attitudes (charismatic leadership role), similar conclusions drawn by other research in the same field (Stace and Dunphy, 1996; Kouzes and Posner, 1995; Whipp and Pettigrew, 1993). The change implemented by the three organisations was successful because leaders had effectively integrated operational improvements with strategic transformation and corporate self-renewal that embraced collaborative and distributive practices and by implication strong interpersonal relationships. Graetz (2000) argued that for success in implementing change, organisations must create a connection between the traditional technical or operational dimension of management and the strategic, interpersonal dimension.

The ability to conciliate and balance the two roles depends primarily on whether leaders possess certain qualities and attributes required for effective leadership. These qualities and attributes, that distinguish strong interpersonal skills as an ingredient, provide the nexus between the charismatic and instrumental roles. By blending charisma and widespread involvement with instrumental factors, that focus on developing roles, responsibilities, structures, systems and rewards, the critical building-blocks for driving organisation-wide change are set firmly in place (Graetz, 2000). The qualities which characterised interpersonal leadership relationships being identified by Goleman (1998) as including: honesty, integrity, trustworthy, inspiring, competent, high degree of emotional intelligence, self-confidence, awareness, strong drive, and energy to achieve openness to new ideas/change. The overlap between transformational leadership as a moral agency and the relationship between leaders and followers

grounded in the needs, wants, aspirations and values of the followers can clearly be identified with the interpersonal attributes defined by Goleman (1998).

Distributed leadership

Distributive leadership is concerned primarily with the process of decision-making. The approach supports the notion of shared or distributed leadership and is linked to democratic values and empowerment (Bush and Glover, 2003). It highlights leadership as an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals, described by Gronn (2002) as 'concertive action' reflecting an openness of leadership boundaries compared with the closed boundaries associated with more authoritarian and formal positions of leadership. Distributed leadership assumes leadership can be found at all levels of the organisation and depends largely on the competencies and expertise of the individuals concerned, although theories rarely quantify the processes by which these are energised and identified. Evidence from research (Leithwood & Reihl, 2003) points to a clear implication that distributed leadership contributes to school improvement and competency building although (Harris, 2004) suggests that evidence for the form that distributed leadership takes in practice is limited.

Graetz (2000) holds that distributed leadership is more effective than positional leadership because it does not depend on a strong leadership at the top of the organisational structure but involves downward distribution of leadership roles – a cascading idea of leadership, although the effectiveness of this is questioned by Coad (2000) through their study of leadership in the National Health Service. Hartley and Allison (2000) perceives distributed leadership as exercised by people through alliances, support systems and collaborative cultures whilst Harris (2004) considers

distributed leadership as important for capacity building within schools, ultimately contributing to school improvement.

Spillane et al (2001) argue that distributed leadership is the process of thinking and acting in a particular situation so as to facilitate teaching and learning and consequently can be distributed among positional and informal leadership. It is essentially a 'theories in use' perspective of leadership whilst Harris (2004) questions whether distributed leadership depends upon the formal positions within the organisation or if it is likely to occur spontaneously from the activities of teachers working together.

The conclusion drawn from the research undertaken by Harris & Chapman (2002) into schools considered to be improving in terms of student outcomes was, that whilst singular leadership was often a catalyst for change within schools, the momentum for continued improvements was more likely to occur where distributive leadership in practice was evident. There is some degree of resonance with the case study school featured in this research, where the initial impetus for change and improvement came from the positional leadership of the headteacher but sustained through enabling and empowering others to lead over time.

"However, the particular emphasis given by heads to allocating improvement responsibilities to those not in formal leadership positions would suggest an approach that has both distributive and transformational principles at its core". (Harris, 2004, p18)

Empirical evidence points to successful leaders as those who, through transformational leadership styles, are able to empower others in the organisation to take on leadership roles in creating learning cultures where distributed leadership enables organisational development and change (Harris 2004). Although leadership can be located at all levels within the organisation the centrality of the positional leader remains axiomatic in

understanding and interpreting leadership that is transforming whilst not removing entirely the bottom/up construct of distributed leadership identified through Bennett et al's (2003) work on the relationship between positional and informal leadership. The impact of distributed leadership on student outcomes and in what form, however, still remains an area of conjecture and debate.

Gronn (2002) argues that distributed leadership is a more meaningful construct of leadership than the conventional constructs of leadership which place considerable emphasis on 'focused leadership' where the unit of analysis consists largely of a *solo or stand-alone leader* (p423). The distributed leadership perspective is rationalised by arguing that orthodox constructs of leadership inadequately describe leadership in practice whereas distributive leadership constructs are more aligned to the division of labour and the way in which work is currently articulated as part of emerging practices seen in the work place. Where, increasingly, there is dissatisfaction with individually conceived leadership, or leader-centrism. In Gronn's analysis, the division of labour is seen in terms of the boundary between leader-followers and leadership-followership with the orthodox view of leadership equated to a prescriptive rather than descriptive perspective that fails to adequately accommodate the changing and complex nature of organisations.

Central to this argument is the notion that, as tasks become increasingly more sophisticated and technical the changing division of labour represents the emergence of role interdependence and coordination that results in distributed patterns of leadership. Essentially Gronn (2002) is arguing that no one leader could possess the multiple capabilities or attributes to meet the internal or external demands on an organisation, therefore implying the need for distributive leadership where individuals, within

specific constraints determined by the task, articulate a leadership role through their work.

In the context of a school this would be translated in practice through Heads of Department, SEN Manager, Heads of Year et al who, within the organisation, hold specific leadership roles moderated by identified areas of responsibility and the overarching vision of the school.

The interpretation of distributed leadership by Gronn (2002) seems to be at variance with the understanding that Bush and Glover (2003) have of leadership generally, which is seen in terms of the processes of influence and an articulation of a vision based on personal and professional values shared by the stakeholders in the organisation. The construct articulated by Gronn (2002) appears more aligned to the processes of management than the usual understanding of organisational leadership espoused through the various literature reviews on leadership.

Within an organisational context it may be possible to create teams to achieve specific purposes or tasks, chaired by nominated leaders but working within the constraints of the strategic frameworks established and articulated by those with positional leadership authority. Whilst an orthodox leader, as defined in terms of transformational or charismatic leadership and representing leadership-centrism in the Gronn (2002) model, has an unlimited sphere of influence the localised, task orientated leader or manager, synonymous with the distributed leadership construct articulated by Gronn (2002), has a limited sphere of influence in the context of the organisation as a whole.

Transformational leadership, has at its focus the leader-follower relationship and the centrality of vision as a key element in organisational change and effectiveness, whereas distributed leadership seems more orientated towards task completion, managed by nominated representational leaders having a structured role, operating within the strategic boundaries determined by the positional leader of the organisation.

Within this construct, completions of agreed tasks contribute to the achievement of the overall vision of the organisation articulated through the solo or stand-alone leader envisaged by Bush and Glover (2003) and others. Within the structured role context of teams within organisations it may be argued that distributive leadership is an attribute of transformational leadership serving as a sub-set and not a replacement for the leadership-centrism envisaged by Gronn (2002). Harris (2004) concurs with this perspective of distributed leadership and the dependence on formal leadership roles to ensure it becomes a common currency within organisations.

“Rather the job of those in formal leadership positions is primarily to hold the pieces of the organisation together in a productive relationship. This central task is to create a common culture of expectations around the use of individual skills and abilities. In short, distributing leadership equates with maximising the human capacity within the organisation”. p14

And I would add, ‘through the process of transforming leadership’.

In their desk study of the literature concerning distributive leadership for the National College for School Leadership, Bennett et al (2003), identified three distinct elements emerging. These described distributive leadership as an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals; exhibited open boundaries and advocates that varieties of expertise are distributed across the many, not the few; the implication being that leadership can be found anywhere within an organisation and is not the sole prerogative of the positional leader of the organisation; consequently distributive

leadership can be perceived as deriving from concertive and conjoint activity emphasising it as an emergent property of a group or network of individuals but not located with an individual as would be the traditional construct of leadership.

The constraining variables that could limit or enhance the embodiment of distributive leadership in an organisation were identified through the literature search as the dichotomy between control and autonomy, organisational structure, social and cultural contexts and the source of change; for example positional leader directed or through restructuring. Emerging distributed leadership exhibited a fluid dynamic that depended on the location of expertise within the organisation, subject to the constraining variables, and grounded within a climate of trust that, to a large extent depended on the social and cultural structure. Since leadership could be located at all levels within the organisation there were implications for leadership training programmes that currently tend to have as their focus heads, deputies and middle managers but perhaps should be opened to all members of the teaching profession to reflect the emerging thrust towards distributive practices in schools.

It is argued by Wallace (2001) that teachers are entitled to be part of the leadership process, basing this on the fact that school development decisions affect teachers working conditions. In a democracy the same principles should apply to teachers in schools, there is intrinsic value in shared leadership, learning opportunities are created that will improve performance, adult working relations in schools should provide a role model for cooperative behaviour and shared leadership is potentially more effective than headteachers acting alone. Although in principle, shared leadership (akin to distributive leadership) seems a way of raising achievements through transforming

schools, Wallace indicates through his research, obstacles that may inhibit effective implementation of the shared leadership principle.

Firstly he argues that because of externally imposed targets and conditions, headteachers have lost their freedom to be visionaries since schools are in the business of delivering the educational vision of government education ministers. Secondly it is argued that the teacher culture is not easily manipulated or changed, leading to 'contrived collegiality' identified by Hargreaves (1994) in studies in North America. Thirdly there is a dichotomy between the hierarchical structure of management and leadership in schools and the principle of shared leadership. In the fourth objection, Wallace points to an implied micro-political dimension of schools where the empowerment of other staff doesn't necessarily mean they will take up this entitlement, leading to uncommitted team members who may create stumbling blocks or barriers preventing organisational growth and development.

Attention is drawn to the ironic consequence of central government strategy to render sharing leadership as risky for heads as it is necessary (p156), created as a result of the increased level of accountability of headteachers put in place by government to ensure effective implementation of their reform package. Increased accountability may inhibit headteachers from sharing leadership because it could backfire should empowered teachers act in ways that generate poor standards of pupil achievement (p157); leading Wallace to hypothesise that the way forward is for heads to limit the amount of sharing and adopting a contingency approach that meets the requirements of specific contexts and events.

"If the risk of ineffective leadership can be reduced by limiting the amount of sharing, is it justifiable for headteachers to adopt a contingency approach, varying the degree of sharing as the situation evolves?" p157

Transformational leadership the preferred model

Recent trends in educational leadership styles refer to transformational leadership, see for example Leithwood (1994), as based on the commitment of followers to organisational goals, described along eight dimensions:

1. building school vision;
2. establishing school goals;
3. providing intellectual stimulus;
4. offering individualised support;
5. modelling best practices and important organisational values;
6. demonstrating high performance expectations;
7. creating a productive school culture;
8. developing structures to foster participation in school decisions,

and appears to be the emerging model that underpins current discourse, as expounded by NCSL and others because of its focus on inclusiveness and one that is distributed throughout the school.

One weakness of eight dimensions identified by Leithwood (1994) is that they focus on outcomes rather than processes. For example, the eight domains point towards specific desired outcomes but give no indication of the leadership processes or strategic planning or action that needs to be taken to enable them to develop. Although for effective leadership, as prescribed by NPQH documentation and described in the recent report by OFSTED on leadership and management (OFSTED 2003) these processes are identified as of particular importance, even though the purpose of transformational leadership is not made clear.

A second weakness is that whilst the outcomes identified by Leithwood have been made explicit the detail behind them has not. For example, how is a vision formulated, what structures should be put in place, what should be the goals of the school and what is meant by intellectual stimulus? What is meant by a productive culture and how would a school determine with any degree of certainty they have produced one? Comparisons between Leithwood's eight dimensions and the eight assessment criteria outlined in the OFSTED framework for school inspection show considerable convergence, perhaps indicating that the preferred leadership model is the transformational model described by Leithwood and others. Transformational leadership will however, be limited by the same weaknesses of analysis identified earlier. Indeed, Gold et al (2003) point to the inconsistency between the technical prescriptive descriptions used by OFSTED inspectors and the implied focus on values, learning communities and shared leadership through the Leithwood dimensions.

The dichotomy of transformational leadership and externally driven targets

There is a dichotomy between the images of leadership as one focused on efficiency, effectiveness and performance and the other based on values, learning communities and shared leadership. The dichotomy is created where externally applied criteria and expectations, through the inspection framework and government policies, are brought into conflict with transformational leadership styles that are underpinned by strong values and beliefs which may be at variance with externally articulated values. To resolve this ambiguity Gold et al (2003) set out to show how 'outstanding principals' translate their educational values into management and leadership practices, suggesting that the conception of leadership is neither linked to status nor embodied in the actions

of any single individual instead being grounded in a common commitment to seek improvement underpinned by the explicit or implicit values of the leader.

Successful school leaders are driven by personal, moral and educational values and are able to articulate these with conviction, creating a clear sense of direction for the organisation and point to the centrality of mission and vision (Beare, 1997) However, further research needs to be carried out where the values of the 'principled Principal' (Gold et al, 2003) are at variance with the cultural norms and how this impacts on the efficacy with which the leader is able to carry out their leadership role. Does the leader determine the culture or the culture the leader?

In his essay on school effectiveness, Wrigley (2003), argues the case that there is a difference between school effectiveness and school improvement, where school effectiveness represents a reductionist approach that attempts to replace sociological and pedagogical analysis with increasingly complex statistics. In so doing, the model of school effectiveness ignores the fundamental questions concerning educational aims by reducing education to the attainment of higher test scores – even suggesting that what cannot be measured simply does not count (p90).

The central tenet of Wrigley's argument is that the measures in school effectiveness assume that they refer to a set of desirable qualities which 'good' education might promote when it has not been made transparent who defined the problems in the first place which the school effectiveness movement tries to solve. Instead it is argued that the school effectiveness movement is a projection onto schools by the government of failed social programmes – arguing it is easier to blame ineffective schools (often

located through the effectiveness measures in socially deprived areas) than failed government policy.

The school effectiveness measures are furthered weakened by the apparent slackness in the definition of the characteristics of effective schools. For example, strength of leadership, or focus on teaching and learning, whilst appearing to have a scientific objectivity about them are open to politically expedient interpretation. School improvement, in contrast to school effectiveness that is measured through the imposition of externally determined characteristics, is according to Hopkins (2001), a matter of within-school processes, in which the school and its staff own improvement.

It is a distinct approach to educational change that enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the school's capacity for managing change (Hopkins, 1998, p1036). Therein lies the dichotomy for the headteacher working within the constraints of an accountability culture that sets externally driven effectiveness measures, whilst advocating self-evaluation and transforming leadership processes through the inspection framework. In its extreme, in order to facilitate the achievement of academic gains in externally set tests, headteachers are likely to forego the development of transformational practices, as much to safeguard their own reputations as protecting the school from being labelled as a failing school. In his summary Wrigley (2003) concludes that the school effectiveness paradigm is anti-democratic, citing as two of his reasons:

"...it deprofessionalises teachers, and undermines the collegiality and reflection needed for teachers to take schools in new directions and respond to learners' needs;

it gives headteachers illusory power, within a wider game in which they are increasingly dancing to someone else's tune". p109

Organizational and professional socialisation

The successful process of replacing key officials in organisations, such as the appointment of a new headteacher in a school is dependent on effective organizational and professional socialisation (Hart, 1991) since organisations protect themselves against intrusion of new members, values and beliefs by set routines and through formal and informal social mechanisms, one of which is socialisation.

Although Cosgrove (1986) sought to uncover the culture of the school and the successor's influence upon it, he found that successor principals and teachers had difficulty articulating and agreeing on fundamental assumptions and core cultural values in their schools. They could not identify norms or unspoken rules, assumptions, or beliefs. Yet, despite this failure, they continued to assert that others shared their beliefs and that Principal's should exert powerful influence over school culture. The fact that the transformational model of leadership assumes that the values and beliefs of the leader are understood by the organisation leaves some ambiguity in the context of Hart's and Cosgrove's theories, and needs further research to clarify the emerging issues.

The inspection framework, NPQH and LPSH models suggest that school organisations can produce specific goals and outcomes independently of the actors within the organisation. Greenfield (1973) argues against organisations having a concrete reality suggesting instead, that individuals have a subjective perception of the organisation and consequently hold different meanings to the various stakeholders in schools. This implies the need for leaders to develop strategies for school improvement that are derived from human rather than holistic organisational perspectives. This would

therefore concur with Cosgrove's and Hart's assertion that for transformational leadership to occur the values, beliefs and educational priorities of the leader must be understood and shared with the participants in the organisation. It does, however, fail to resolve the issue of how these become embedded within the culture of the school or explore a theoretical model of how this may be achieved. As Greenfield (1973) suggests, the question should not be what should be done to improve the organisation but whose meanings define the goals to be achieved?

Are externally set targets a limiting factor on transformational leadership?

The government's perspective of the school leader suggests a political domain to school leadership that legislates against the freedom to exercise one's values, beliefs and educational priorities (Wright, 2003). The legislative framework enacted since 1987 and OFSTED publications and the prospectus of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) points to a strong political dimension counterbalancing the arguments put forward by Gold et al (2003). Wright argues that 'bastard leadership' ...

"Is actually about the lack of scope for school leaders to make decisions that legitimately fly in the face of particular unrealistic and often inadequately researched government initiatives or requirements". p140

...supporting his case by suggesting that the market economy within which schools operate legislates against leadership freedom to exercise particular values and beliefs, especially if these interfere, or are perceived to interfere with the achievement of externally and centrally driven policies, policed by OFSTED. Wright argues that leaders, whilst believing they are exercising freedom in the leadership and management of their schools, are merely playing lip service to second order values and the technical implementation of policy requirements.

The natural extension of Wright's hypothesis would seem to suggest that schools do not need leaders, since the externally driven policy initiatives of central government determine the direction in which schools should operate. Schools therefore merely need managers to ensure that the technical aspects and policies are adhered to and, per se, schools will achieve any externally set objectives and targets – an absurd proposition.

However, the vagaries of examination league tables and the results culture do create internal tensions and areas of conflict within schools that headteachers attempt to mediate through their leadership practices. In this sense, Wright's hypothesis rings true, since heads driven by externally applied pressures, may leave interpersonal relationships and other areas of the school underdeveloped in the drive to achieve externally set targets by which they, not the school, will be judged.

Externally set targets and expectations may limit a head's capacity to be innovatory and to take risks, ironically legislating against the transformational style of leadership advocated through the inspection framework and government policy. The headteacher's *modus operandi* being a natural defence to an accountability model where the personal cost of a school being labelled as failing is high. It might be argued that this could stifle the development of shared and distributed leadership practices in schools as headteachers seek to protect their integrity against a model that apports blame for apparent failure at their door. Although there will be instances where this may be a valid conclusion, the measure of 'failure' is subjective, leading to inherent weaknesses in the accountability framework. Where externally imposed criteria are unrelated to contextual settings, snapshots are likely to be produced that are unrepresentative of reality. Judgements will be made using instruments unable to

adequately capture the complexities and nuances of the day-to-day leadership and management of schools.

“Headteachers complained yesterday that they were being treated increasingly like football managers and forced out of their schools if results did not live up to expectations. Advertisements of vacancies in schools are running at their highest since 1997 as heads have paid the penalty for failure to meet often unrealistic goals...

...the pressure to perform and the risk that an unfavourable OFSTED inspection could end their careers were also deterring talented deputies and other senior staff from seeking promotion. Despite rising salaries in recent years, many felt the rewards of headship did not justify the gamble.

...like football club chairmen, local education authorities and governing bodies were demanding success at all costs from their schools and holding heads responsible if pupils failed to deliver results.

...if you get a report saying the school has serious weaknesses or needs special measures, or even that it is coasting, then the person who gets fingered is the head. The governors often get away scot-free; nobody seems to worry about the governors' contribution to why a school is where it is.

...local authorities and governors are becoming more impatient and are being spurred on by government to seek better and better results more and more quickly”.

(Halpin, 2004)

The heightened emotional tensions created through unrealistic goals and expectations are further exasperated by the explicit and implicit assumptions that headteachers are not only experts in the educational field but financial managers, business men, psychologists, social workers, law enforcers, recruitment specialists, mentors, community workers, accountants, salesmen, publishers, maintenance men and consultants pertaining to any matters relating to the social and educational welfare of pupils, parents, governors, staff and stakeholders in the school. A footballer only has to be an expert in the area of football, a headteacher is expected to be an expert in multi-various roles and to implement externally driven initiatives and edicts without recourse to formal platforms for complaint or arbitration.

To compound this, legislation that has driven through human rights, equal opportunities, race discrimination, disability act and a plethora of other reforms, including the latest thrust on inclusion. Creating a recipe for a legislative Pandora's box of litigants, solicitors and activists who, armed with the relevant legislative armour, will have free range to challenge schools with any issue that is politically expedient to do so, spurred on by the monetary prize dangled by aspiring advocates and hiding behind the thin veneer of political correctness.

The moral agency ascribed to transformational leadership by Burns (1978), Bass and Avolio (1985) and others is not delimited to school boundaries but extends into the public domain where, as Wright (2003) is perhaps suggesting, the political arena through which headteachers are expected to fashion a route in educational leadership in uncharted political waters, littered with opinionated mines, produces a modulating effect which sometimes prevents the principles of the principled principal (Gold et al, 2003) from being put into practice. Leading to principled 'bastard' leadership (Wright, 2003).

Is leadership a reflection of individual freedom of interpretation?

Heads however can and do act as mediators between externally imposed goals and the internal cultural dimensions of schools. The interpretation of the expectations by leaders of schools is, I would suggest, dependent on the personal values and perspectives of the individual. Wright (2003) appears to leave insufficient scope for the personal internalisation of externally imposed objectives – and it is this perspective that appears to lack supportive evidence. An analogy with the manager of a premier division football club can be used to exemplify this. Whilst there is the common aim

that clubs in the premier division achieve high levels of success, teams consist of individuals led by managers who exercise different styles of leadership in the achievement of these aims. Failure can and does, lead to a loss in market confidence and relegation with the ensuing financial implications of this.

In a similar way, leaders of schools have specific, externally imposed objectives to meet. But the 'players' within the social constructs of schools, and the way in which they are managed and motivated to achieve these objectives, is determined at the micro level of interpersonal relationships and micro-political foreplay, orchestrated by transformational, transactional, distributive and instructional leadership whose actions are independent of externally imposed boundaries and conditions. As Eden (1998) points out:

"There is a constant threat to leadership control of definition and meaning of reality by teachers with an alternative definition, expressed through criticism and accusations against the leaders and an attempt to avoid contact with them."(p260)

The issue is not what the goals for education should be; the frameworks and policies put in place by successive governments have already established this, but the ambiguity and debate centres around whether leaders of schools are restricted and limited in the way in which they lead their schools in the achievement of externally imposed objectives. Whether one agrees or disagrees with the political interpretation of the meaning of education in the broadest sense is not under debate – policies which have their routes in the quagmire of educational liberalisation of the 1970's, have established a framework of expectation for educational achievement to address the perceived under achievement in the earlier *laissez faire* phase of education synonymous of the late sixties and early seventies.

The dilemma facing headteachers

The foregoing arguments point to a dilemma for headteachers of schools. On the one hand government directives point to the overriding need to develop transforming leadership practices, whilst on the other label headteachers as failing where externally imposed targets are not met. A headteacher is placed in the invidious position of being expected to nurture leadership potential in school whilst accepting the blame if the school is perceived to be underachieving relative to externally applied standards. The dilemma is whether to develop latent leadership potential through transformational practices on the assumption that in doing so standards of achievement will improve. Or take a pragmatic approach to leadership that rationalises actions in terms of measurable outcomes, limiting devolved leadership in order to service absolute control and for keeping personal integrity in tact.

Bush and Glover (2003) state that transformational leadership describes a particular type of influence process based on increasing the commitment of followers to organisational goals.

“Leaders seek to engage the support of teachers for their vision for the school and to enhance their capacities to contribute to goal achievement. Its focus is on this process rather than on particular types of outcomes”. p15

There is no argument with the statement by Bush and Glover. How this translates in practice is, I suggest, moderated by government policy and targets on the one hand and accountability model on the other. Headteachers seek to engage support of teachers for their vision of the school, but the vision may be limited as headteachers seek to protect the school and by implication themselves from adverse judgements if the school fails to achieve its vision. There is a strong case to be made in favour of the decentralisation of

government control and policing if raising standards through transforming leadership practices is to become the common currency in schools.

Does leadership impact on learning?

Since leadership is linked to successful schools it would be expected to find a correlation between effective leadership and effective learning. Reporting on leadership for teachers' action learning Yeun and Cheng (2000) identified three dimensions for facilitating effective learning. The first is characterised by building an institutional shared vision; the second, is aimed at reducing the defensive routines to change and the third, enhances the theoretical knowledge and repertoires of skills and provides intellectual stimulation. Analogies can be drawn between transformational, transactional and instructional leadership and the three domains identified by Yeun and Cheng although further research would be needed to identify which strand, if any, made the most significant impact on learning.

The research into the impact of transformational leadership by Geijsel et al (2003) on teacher commitment and motivation and by implication on student performance set out to address the question of whether the variation in teachers' commitment to change is explained by the three core dimensions of transformational leadership (vision building, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation) and whether the three dimensions have different levels of influence on different sources of teachers' commitment to change. It also provided evidence of transformational leadership effects on variables such as subordinate performance, trust in leader, satisfaction with leader, commitment, extra effort, perceptions of effectiveness, and organizational citizenship behaviour.

Overall, the study seems to indicate that the strongest impact on teachers' commitment was through the transformational core dimensions of vision building and intellectual stimulation, although mainly measured at an organizational level rather than at individual classroom level. The extent to which these, and the other core dimensions impact on classroom performance need further investigation if schools are to utilise the information to impact on student performance and achievement. Vision building is a concept central to understanding the transformational model of leadership, although it does not follow it is exclusively linked to this particular style of leadership. The evidence base that highlights how the process of vision building takes shape and the mechanisms for placing it at the heart of an organisation is thin on the ground.

The Leadership for Organisational Learning and Student Outcomes (LOLSO) Research Project carried out by Mulford and Silins (2001) attempted to measure the link, if any, between a headteacher's style of leadership, organisational learning and student outcomes. The research indicated that the predominant feature in explaining the variation in organisational learning in secondary schools was the quality of leadership, with transformational leadership being more conducive to creating an active organisational learning environment, and by implication improved student outcomes. Further, they argued, through path analysis that academic achievements were indirectly related to the leadership style since this impacted on teaching practices in the classroom. The report did not indicate the criteria used to measure academic achievement, nor indicate whether any particular leadership style negatively impacted on student outcomes, although they did suggest that school size and socio-economic status can produce a negative relationship. The case is made for distributive practices to be developed since this can build on the commitment and enthusiasm of all those who work in schools. On the other hand transactional leadership is perceived as only a

short-term measure since it has the potential for ‘facades of orderly purposefulness’, doing things right rather than doing the right thing’, ‘building in canvas’, or ‘procedural illusions of effectiveness’, p7, rather than contributing to long-term sustainable improvements in student outcomes.

I do not subscribe to the Mulford and Silins (2001) line of argument that suggests there is only an indirect link between student outcomes and style of leadership. It seems to be an argument centred on semantics and the interpretation of what is understood by ‘direct’ relationship. If, through transformational, instructional and transactional leadership, teaching and learning competencies are increased and improved, student academic outcomes might be expected to also improve. In this sense, there is clearly a direct correlation between the leadership style and student outcomes. To argue that because teachers are an intermediary between the leader and the classroom, only an indirect relationship between cause and effect exists is dubious because it fails to accommodate the connection between classroom performance and leadership. If this were not the case, it would seem almost pointless for government, training organisations and the inspection framework to concentrate on leadership if it were not considered to have a direct impact on school performance and pupil achievements.

Teacher empowerment

Empowered teachers participate in critical decisions that directly affect teaching and learning (Dee et al, 2003) and empowerment may be associated with effective performance (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Hall, 1994; Schein, 1992; Yukl, 1989) and organisational commitment (Konczak et al, 2000; McDermott et al, 1996; Nyhan, 2000). The connection between empowerment and performance implies that potentially, empowerment has the capacity to energise followers to take actions in the

interest of the organisation rather than self. The question of what is meant by empowerment and the conditions conducive to its development within organisations is therefore of significant importance and according to Dee et al (2003) can be considered both in terms of structural and a psychological constructs.

The structural construct relates to the way in which leadership is shared through the organization whilst the psychological construct focuses on intrinsic motivation rather than on managerial practices. There is a resonance between both these constructs and transformational leadership and the associated typographies previously discussed, suggesting that empowerment can be perceived as a bi-product of transforming leadership processes.

Intrinsic motivation represents a heightened moral awareness that transcends self for the good of the organisation, whilst shared leadership is an outcome of transformational leadership enabling others in the organisation to take on leadership roles enabling organisational development and change. In their definition of transformational leadership Bass (1985) considered it to be a form of leadership that motivated people to do more than they originally expected to and in this sense represented moral leadership that worked towards the benefit and growth of followers rather than satisfying the needs of self; closely aligned to the psychological empowerment construct discussed by Dee et al (2003).

Transforming leadership empowers followers by developing capacity and competency, absence of either presenting a limiting factor to empowerment potential. Empowerment depends on the degree of autonomy that can be exercised in the organisation by the individual or group, the specific knowledge and skills needed to carry out defined

functions and tasks, a conceptual understanding of the contribution by the individual or group to the organisation as a whole and independent measures and criteria for judging the effectiveness of the individual or group. The prerequisites for empowerment suggest that transforming leadership practices must firstly focus on capacity development in order to enable autonomy and distributive leadership to be exercised. A de-skilled work force cannot be empowered and consequently it could be argued that the degree of empowerment within an organisation is a measure of the efficacy of transforming leadership practices and capacity development in particular.

The development of a learning community, which enhances teacher empowerment, would seem to suggest transformational leadership as more effective than transactional leadership. Transactional leadership lends itself, through the exchange process, to the maintenance of performance-goal orientation than learning-goal orientation that is intrinsically linked with increasing competencies and learning from mistakes through reflective practices. The same conclusion is drawn by Coad and Berry (1998) from their empirical study of professional accountants in the UK.

“It also seems reasonable to conclude that if learning orientation is a desirable characteristic of actors in a learning organization then the clear relationships observed suggest that the preferred leadership style should be transformational”. p169

The four domains of transformational leadership, individual consideration, individual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealized influence (Bass and Avolio, 1994) lend themselves to the development of learning communities and empowerment of followers. In particular, individual stimulation creates opportunities for re-thinking old ways and trying new approaches, through inspirational motivation clear and optimistic futures are mapped out, individualised consideration creates learning opportunities and idealized influence provides effective role models for followers to emulate.

There are similarities between the transformational domains and the leadership paradigm that facilitates teachers' action learning proposed by Yuen and Cheng (2000) where through the learning cycle of mental modelling, action, monitoring and reflection teachers gain professional competence and practice. The leadership framework proposed by Yuen and Cheng for encouraging action learning embraces elements of trust, inspiration, social support, collaboration, vision building and intrinsic beliefs, similar to the domains defined in the transformational construct of Bass and Avolio. The Yuen and Cheng learning cycle consists of a continuous learning loop where practitioners reflect on practice, changing mental models (that is the body of knowledge abstracted from experience) through questioning mental models in the light of experience and through exploring the reasons for the mismatch between intentions and outcomes.

The point is made that teachers will sometimes opt out of the cyclic loop of learning for a variety of reasons, including the reluctance in accepting apparent underperformance and implied failure. This has important implications for the leadership of the organization, since if teachers abandon or become distanced from the learning cycle, they will become increasingly alienated from the organizational culture and present immovable barriers to the change process. Whereas Bass and Avolio (1994) assume the professional preparedness of followers to take on the mantle of active learners, pragmatically, Yuen and Cheng signal a more realistic scenario where this would not be the case and therefore the necessity for leaders to plan for this eventuality. Taking this one step further, it would seem to suggest, empowerment is limited and mediated

by the organisational hierarchy and leadership style but also by the learning capacity and capabilities of the individual.

The implications for developing teacher leadership are therefore significant since whilst research suggests that empowering teachers to take on leadership roles enhances teachers' self-esteem and work satisfaction, which in turn leads to higher levels of performance due to higher motivation, as well as possibly higher levels of retention in the profession (Katzenmayer and Moller, 2001; Ovando, 1996), not all teachers are capable of being professionally developed to the necessary competency level to take on the teacher leadership role beyond the classroom domain, even though an individual's self-perception may lead them to think otherwise. Inevitably this will lead to conflict and ambiguity within the school organisation and is an area of criticism of the literature and research related to empowerment and teacher leadership.

The instruments used to gauge and measure the effectiveness of leadership characteristics and associated perceptions of empowerment by followers appears often to be based on a desk exercise rather than grounded in the day-to-day leadership of schools. There is an undercurrent running through most of the research documentation that seems to support the abandonment of the traditional construct of leadership in schools in favour of an imagined state where there is a collective responsibility for leadership and decision taking through a contrived consensus of opinion. The difficulty with this abrogation of the traditional normative leadership construct is the absence of an associated collective framework of accountability and how the disparate groups within an organisation are to be monitored and evaluated against any agreed criteria or objectives, particularly in the context of externally imposed targets and expectations.

Empowered teachers assumes an effective professional learning community (Hargreaves, 2002), characterised through joint responsibilities and decision making whilst Wasley (1991) advocates teachers should be involved in the process of deciding what roles, if any, they wish to take on and Little (1995) suggests that sustained teacher leadership is unlikely in the absence of remuneration packages to encourage and engage teachers in leadership tasks.

To a certain extent Wasley's view equates with the notion in transformational leadership of satisfying the needs of followers, whereas Little's position appears to be in complete antipathy to the moral dimension of transformational leadership, more akin to transactional leadership or exchange theory. Pragmatically, both views hold true within limited constraints.

It clearly would be sensible to match the teacher's unique experience and aptitude with the contextual requirements and similarly, where increased responsibilities equate with additional time and commitment, it would be appropriate to reward a teacher with some form of remuneration package. The difficulty is in discerning the ulterior motives of the teacher – for example a teacher specifying the leadership role they want may be driven by selfish or egocentric needs or because the envisaged roles are perceived as easier to succeed with, thereby avoiding the possibility of failure; seeking financial rewards before accepting leadership roles may indicate a lack of true commitment to the school or an intrinsic belief in education. Empowerment may be achieved, but whether under such conditions it is sustainable, or leads to organisational improvement over time, is questionable where the motives for seeking leadership status are not in keeping with the values and beliefs of the school.

There is an acknowledgement within the literature that whilst teaching strongly influences pupils' motivation, the quality of leadership is a determinant in motivating teachers (Fullan, 2001; Sergiovanni, 1999), although the construct of a singular leader in schools is criticised (Muijs and Harris, 2003). Teacher leadership can be thought of in terms of leading pupils, operations and decision-making, calling on the range of expertise that teachers have (Muijs and Harris, 2003), inferring that all members of the organisation have the capacity to lead, pointing to a shared and distributive leadership and through this process to teacher empowerment. The four dimensions of teacher leadership, identified by Day and Harris (2003), being translating vision into practice, ownership of the change process, using teacher expertise for school improvement and interpersonal relationships to support mutual learning (collaborative practices).

In their research into the way in which principals use micro-political structures to directly or indirectly contribute to teachers' sense of empowerment Blase & Blase (1997) found that facilitative leadership is based on equitable exchanges between principals and teachers and that empowerment was based on value congruence. Evidence of exchange dynamics and value congruence was directly observed in a substantial portion of the data available. The interpretation of facilitative leadership described in the report would suggest that this is akin to transformational leadership and exchange dynamics and value congruence likened to transactional and instructional leadership respectively.

The omission of what is meant by teacher empowerment leaves the findings open to subjective interpretation, although one definition suggests it is "to encourage mutual and even independent determination of both the means and goals of teacher's work" Blase & Blase (1997, p158). The loosely worded definition of teacher empowerment

could lead to multiple interpretations dependent on the audience receiving it. It is claimed, however, that under transformational forms of leadership, principles avoided a judgemental/evaluative role in dealing with teachers, whereas under more traditional and authoritarian leadership models, judgemental and evaluative procedures were commonplace, leading the authors to claim that this reflected an underlying mistrust of the teachers' professional judgements and legislated against empowerment and innovative practices requiring risk taking.

The transformational leadership model seems to suggest a flattened hierarchy, in which each individual is able to exercise a leadership role united by a common understanding of the vision and values of the organisation. I would argue that because of the positional authority of an appointed leader, this is unlikely to occur in practice since the nationally agreed headteacher contract, reinforces an accountability model which is more commensurate with a hierarchical structure headed by one identified leader, than with the flattened hierarchy of an organisation consisting of many leaders. This points to some inherent weaknesses in the transformational model of leadership, in particular, how the model interprets the differences between leadership, management and delegation. The claim that transformational leadership leads to fewer judgemental and evaluative procedures (Blase & Blase, 1997) would be brought into question if traditional hierarchical structures could be shown to be just as prominent under transformational leadership as authoritative leadership styles. A longitudinal research of successful schools, in similar contexts, but under different styles of leadership would be valuable for testing whether resistance to change is more evident under a traditional or authoritarian regime and for testing the hypothesis proposed.

Transformational leaders are not all good and followers not all bad

Most theories of leadership, especially transformational leadership, imply that leadership is a good and positive thing and that there is a willingness of largely passive followers to embrace the vision and goals of the leader. Indeed, the transformational models suggests that followers experience a sense of awe, motivation and commitment to leader ideals whilst at the same time overlooking the fact that inspired and empowered followers can also take actions that produce decidedly negative consequences for the leader. Some of these actions may stem from attempts to gain personal benefit whilst others result simply from personal characteristics having an inadvertent negative influence on the leader-follower relationship. As Clements & Washbush (1999) point out in their discussion of the darker side of leader-follower dynamics: "Followers are collaborators in the influence process no matter what the leadership model is". p172

The implications of this are clear. Leaders themselves can misread situations and act in inappropriate ways. Similarly, followers may, with good or bad intentions, contribute significantly to those misperceptions and take injudicious actions. No leader is exempt from taking decisions, whether or not well intentioned, that can lead to the worst of consequences and no follower is protected from being an active participant in the process. Therefore, leadership training and theoretical models of leadership must give ample weight to these realities especially through NPQH, LPSH and NCSL programmes of study.

"We have to define not only the positive side of leadership, but we must take pains to illuminate the characteristics of the negative side and present them with equal weight. This will require some courage because we have been conditioned to emphasize positives and euphemize negatives". Clements & Washbush (1999, p174)

The way in which negativism can block the integration of effective transformational leadership throughout organizations is supported by the evidence from the case study carried out by Coad (2000) designed to identify the processes that inhibited the diffusion (the 'falling dominoes effect') of transformational leadership through a particular department within the National Health Service; the findings highlighting the way in which the actions of individuals can prevent the effective integration of transformational leadership throughout the organization thereby limiting the efficacy of the management and leadership process.

"A major implication of the evidence is that it is naïve for senior management to expect the benefits of transformational leadership merely by installing a transformational leader at the head of an organizational unit. What started as transformational leadership at the top of the department became polluted by self-serving behaviour and management by exception at lower levels... it shows that delegation by a transformational leader does not habitually result in transformational leadership at lower levels...the case shows that self-serving behaviour by a single individual has the potential to undermine transformational leadership". (Coad, p316)

Transformational leadership has been presented through educational literature, the NPQH and LPHS programmes and reinforced through the OFSTED inspection framework as being equated with successful schools and by implication successful leaders; it is somewhat surprising therefore to find little attention paid to the barriers that potential leaders are likely to encounter and few, if any, coping strategies suggested within the training programmes developed or clear indications of how transformational leadership may be integrated and diffused within all levels of the management and organisational hierarchy. Naively, educational literature and government sponsored training programmes appear to assume the existence of a willing and able work force ready to embrace transformational leadership – this may not be the case and needs further research and analysis.

Resistance to change

The nature of transformational leadership is that it is synonymous with change, and change begets resistance and barriers to the change process. Whilst transforming leadership embodies, as has been indicated through this literature review, a range of leadership strategies in order to accommodate contextual undulations, the theoretical perspectives tend to overlook the emotional, interpersonal and emotive driving forces that create tensions, ambiguities, conflict and resistance to change.

It is well known that resistance to change occurs because it threatens the status quo (Beer, 1980; Hannan and Freeman, 1988; Spector, 1989), or increases fear and anxiety of real or imagined consequences (Morris and Raben, 1995; Smith and Berg, 1987) including threats to personal security and self-confidence and the confidence in the ability to perform (Morris and Raben, 1995; O'Toole, 1995). Where transforming leadership calls for the abandonment of personal values and beliefs, that is transcending self for the 'good' of the organisation, understandably people may feel vulnerable as the rationality of their value systems are questioned and sometimes displaced, initiating defence mechanisms that lead to conflict and contrived participation.

Effective management of change is concerned with building the capacity for change whilst understanding the emotional reasons for resistance to change. Connor (1995) identifies lack of trust, believing change unnecessary, economic threats, high personal costs, loss of status and power, threats to values/ideals, fear of failure and the resentment to interference as the main causes of resistance to change. It is however argued that since there are strong emotional energies associated with resistance to

change (James and Connolly, 2000) it should be harnessed to improve change through encouraging adaptability and flexibility. The key to successful implementation of the change process being dependent on the three dimensions capability of ability, motivation and opportunities, each of which is related to the purpose of change.

Whilst the traditional construct of resistance to change is perceived from an individuals perspective, Ford et al (2002) argue that resistance to change may be as a result of the constructed reality in which people live rather than constructed at an individual level. They relocate resistance as a response to a change initiative that is a product of the background conversations that constitute the constructed reality in which the participants live. By conversations, Ford et al are implying the general type of interactions in which people engage. The three types of conversations identified, complacency, resignation and cynicism, lead to distinct and identifiable types of resistance to change.

The complacency conversation has its antecedents within the historical construct of success, where it would be argued that in being successful in the past there is no reason to think an organization cannot continue to be successful in the future using the same strategies and habits of working that have worked well previously. Organizational members would argue that new goals are unnecessary in the face of presumed continuation of prior success and will refer to the past to justify the present and future desired states.

“There is talk about relative comfort and satisfaction with the way things are, the way things are done, and their preferred continuation to ensure success in the future”. (Ford et al, 2002, p110)

In recent years OFSTED inspections have identified schools that whilst performing well in public examinations, have nevertheless been considered to be coasting and at

risk of failing the inspection. The perceptions of the apparently successful school can become blinkered where others schools within the same area are under performing, leading to an assumption that things cannot be improved since they are outperforming others and therefore, per se, they must be good and little reason to change or question practice – a constructed reality of complacency has evolved and a presumption of continuation of prior success and a rationalisation for the status quo to remain.

The resigned conversation identified by Ford et al (2002) is, like complacency conversation, located within a historical construct, the difference being that it is focused on failure rather than success. The assumption of those resistant to change within this construct reflect a pessimism that suggests they are unable to change things and are resigned to the belief that failure in the past signals likely failure in the future, justifying their reluctance to change, they have given up trying, knowing they will fail. Commensurate with the resigned conversation construct are feelings of despair, apathy, hopelessness, depression, sadness and listlessness.

“Introducing a proposal for change into a resigned background will engender resigned resistance conversations, characterised by half-hearted actions having no life or power in them, and reflecting a lack of motivation and an apparent unwillingness to participate”. (Ford et al, 2002, p111)

In the school context a resigned conversational background may be located in those schools that over the years have failed to improve performance despite trying a range of initiatives and with the support of external advisory services. They are likely to be located in areas of high unemployment, social deprivation and inner city – backgrounds that create particular challenges for school leaders and teachers. They are likely to be located within a downward spiral of despair and resignation that things cannot be changed, especially with all the odds apparently stacked against them.

The cynical conversational construct is also a historic failure construct differing from resigned conversational construct through aligning the cause of failure to external agencies, whether real or imagined, and therefore beyond the internal control of the organisation. Initiatives imposed by others outside the organisation are viewed through a cynical lens and seen as intrusions on their reality – members of the organisation argue that nothing can change until ‘it’ is changed; it is the way things are. Cynical conversations reflect a distrust and disbelief in others and are likely to include emotions of anger, resentment, scorn, derision and contempt.

“Conversations in a cynical background are likely to include references to being let down, deceived, betrayed, or misled by powerful others. These conversations insist, with varying degrees of subtlety, that others knew or should have known the truth about the fixed external reality: they should have known what would happen, or they didn’t tell the truth about what they knew”. (Ford et al, 2002, p112)

Schools are subject to externally imposed initiatives and targets and in recent years these have proliferated, being policed through the inspection process. A school organization that is characterised by a cynical conversational construct would resist the externally imposed changes through arguments that question the creditability and integrity of the people who are proposing or affiliated with the change initiatives.

Ford et al (2002) consider that a traditionalist approach to resolving resistance to change is unlikely to succeed and advocate strategies that address the background conversations rather than individuals. Conversations that include complaining, gossiping, undermining and other forms of reactive speaking, they argue, contribute to the construction of complacent, resigned and cynical backgrounds and it is these therefore that leaders should transform if change process are to be implemented successfully.

Traditional approaches to resistance to change tend to centre on control and reduction strategies rather than accepting that meanings assigned to happenings today are informed by historic constructs that in turn underscore perceived future possibilities. Consequently, in order to address the historic based conversational constructs, closure conversations are a necessary part of the strategy since through closure, reinvention and reframing are possibilities and opportunities can be created for examination of underlying assumptions, accountability and responsibility for what has happened can be assigned so that an opportunity to clear records of the past can be made and new conversations established for the future.

“Traditional situation orientated attempts to overcome resistance that is a product of constructed background conversations will only serve further to reinforce that background and expand or strengthen resistance. What is required are strategies that address the background conversations”. (Ford et al, 2002, p 114)

Resistance to change can be beneficial and rather than viewing it through a traditional destructive perspective it should be embraced (Waddell and Sohal, 1998). Resistance to change has classically been understood as a cause of conflict that is undesirable in an organization and can have destructive consequences on it. Whilst resistance to change can be located both within rational and non-rational factors it is a fallacy in looking at resistance to assume all changes are good; resistance should be seen as part of the process that balances the external and internal pressures for change and the needs of the individual. Through resistance to change it is possible to search for alternative solutions and it can be a critical source of innovation providing an influx of energy and motivation. Rather than perceiving resistance as an unwanted intrusion in the change process it should be welcomed as part of the necessary evolutionary process of organisational change and improvement.

"Resistance can play a crucial role in drawing everyone's attention to aspects of change that may be inappropriate, not well thought through or perhaps plain wrong". p547

The views of Waddell and Sohal (1998) together with those of James and Connolly (2000) suggest that rather than attempting to control and limit resistance to change, it should be harnessed through distributive and team practices, consistent with a form of transforming leadership, to create opportunities for reflective practices, development of the capacity for change and as a mediating influence on change. Burdett (1999) makes the point that for those at the sharp front of delivering change the concept that people, as a fact of life, resist change, is a comforting presumption that attempts to distance them from how they lead and that they may be the cause of the problem.

"People do not resist change; they sensibly reject what fails to touch that which they have the capacity to be passionate about". p7

Burdett (1999) argues that change is a natural dimension of how we live our lives and the lack of change equates to stagnation, loss of self-esteem and undue stress; suggesting that the real question should be the how and why leaders prevent change from happening. In articulating the domains that impact on effective change processes, Burdett (1999) highlights vision, language, integrity, instructional learning, challenge, coaching and mentoring and the building of trust through truth as key components. The promotion of constructive conflict rather than coercive formalization that results in control and inhibits change is seen by DiPaola and Hoy (2001) as a solution to the fact that people are unaccustomed to confronting conflict and wish to avoid uncomfortable situations where possible and Morgan and Brightman (2000) consider managing change is about managing people and the need to align purpose with the driving force of the person.

"Unless people can integrate change on a personal level, they cannot sustain it organizationally". p68

Change is a shared responsibility for everyone in the organisation and the arguments presented by Burdett, Morgan and Brightman, Dipaola and Hoy and others, point to shared and distributed leadership development within organisations for the effective implementation of change. Resistance, whilst almost inevitable, is not perceived from a traditional destructive perspective, but as a necessary component of organizational growth and development. Correctly harnessed through effective leadership practices, it is a powerful and critical source of energy, motivation, development and mediation.

*"Personal change occurs through many incremental adjustments to our individual beliefs, skills, values, and behaviors. Over time the summation across an organization of these incremental individual adjustments in beliefs, skills, values, and behaviors produces real change for an organization".
(Morgan and Brightman, 2000, p72)*

The politics of leadership

Schools are political organisations through which leaders articulate their own values, beliefs and aspirations with the purpose of bringing about change. However, as Greenfield (1992) posits it may not be possible to change organisations if it is assumed they exist apart from people. Arguing instead that organisations are a product of those who work in them, thereby leading to the interesting question of how the goals of individuals are transformed into the goals of the organisation. In the conventional view of organisations it is argued that leaders think only in terms of achieving specific goals through internal structures and procedures, rather than through change agents concentrating on the human activity that create organisations.

This line of argument is taken further by Bennett (2004) who suggests the apparent rigidity and formality of organisational structures lies in the way in which they define

interpersonal relationships and the areas of influence in which they can make decisions. Further arguing that interpersonal relationships are not between equals and that a crucial dimension is the formal relations defined by the structures and the power each individual brings to the relationship.

...the range of structural elements that might impact on a person's work in an organisation and also the dynamic that is at work, which I suggest is power. (p48)

The implication for leadership processes is self-evident, whilst leaders are a source of power and influence, they can neither work in a vacuum nor work independently of the social micro-political environment if they are to act as effective change agents in the organisation. In their study of how leadership mediated the internal and external contexts in schools, Busher and Barker (2003), premise that leaders operate in organisations with an 'inherently inequitable distribution of power' (p63) and that stake holders in the school (staff, pupils, parents) determine the nature and culture of the school through micro-political processes. The inference being that micro-political processes are at the heart of power and influence and an understanding of the various sources of power is a prerequisite for affecting and implementing effective change in schools and other organisations.

"To counter such resistance, leaders in school engage in a variety of micro-political strategies". (Busher, 2001)

Power and influence form part of the micro-political backdrop in schools and other organisations. Power was conceptualised by Hardy (1994) along four dimensions including, decision-making, non-decision making, symbolic and system. The domains embraced situations where individuals or groups could determine both the agenda and decisions, to the power that lies largely in the acceptance of cultural norms and values and the power to shape or mould people's perceptions of reality. In their study of

effective change in schools, James and Connolly (2000), identify power as a key determinant in the exercise of leadership in schools.

It is difficult to conceive of leadership without the use of power to influence individuals and events (James and Connolly, 2000, p144).

And in his work on educational leadership and management, Bush (2003), considers power as the ability to determine the behaviour of others or to decide the outcome of conflict (p97). Although the sources of power within schools are varied, they broadly fall into two distinct categories. The first is legitimised power through positional authority, such as the headteacher, the second the power exerted through influence, depending more on personal traits and attributes than through formal leadership positions within the school or organisation. Hoyle (1989), points to the way these two categorisations of power function within schools:

Influence differs from authority in having a number of sources in the organization, in being embedded in the actual relationships between groups rather than located in an abstract legal source, and is not fixed but is variable and operates through bargaining, manipulation, exchange and so forth. (Hoyle, 1989, p90)

Both Blase (1991) and Ball (1987) acknowledge the use of formal and informal power by individuals and groups to achieve their goals whilst pointing to the central and critical role of the headteacher in the micro-political processes in schools. Further, the legal responsibility of the headteacher places him/her in a unique position of licensed autocracy (Ball, p80).

The primary assumption...is that in normal circumstances the head is the major focus of micro-political activity in the school but that the possibilities of headship are realized within the specific constraints of a particular setting, history and context. (Ball, 1987, p81)

If organisations, and their associated goals and aspirations, are the product of social micro-political interpersonal relationships between groups and individuals, there are significant implications for the leadership style exercised in them. Firstly, whilst the headteacher may exercise power and influence through positional licensed authority the need for alignment between his/her values, beliefs and aspirations and those being led may temper the imbalance in power sources brought to the exchange process. Secondly, organisational structures and procedures can be used to confer legitimate power, authority and influence to others in the organisation. Thirdly, the exercise of power and influence can be both covert and overt; deployed to bring about compliance and/or commitment. Where, according to Bennett (2004), the use of economic and physical power sources in exchange processes are more likely to result in compliance rather than commitment. Lastly, power sources and consequently authority, influence and legitimacy, are fluid and dynamic as structures and procedures evolve and change over time.

The interconnections between power, structure and culture are therefore key factors in defining the organisation, its direction and effectiveness. Power, structure and culture being defined through the three-dimensional model of organisational operation proposed by Bennett (2004), and seen as the distillation of the social reality within which individuals make decisions and operate; a social reality characterised through the continuous process of bargaining and the formation of coalitions between groups and individuals.

Formal and informal structures provide the vehicle through which power resources can be deployed. (p58)

A headteacher can exert considerable control over organisational activities through power and authority vested in the position. Amongst others, Hoyle (1989) identifies

material resources, promotion, esteem, autonomy and the lax application of rules, as categories of 'goods' available for exchange (p72). Although there may be an imbalance in the power equation between headteacher and teaching staff, Hoyle (1989) argues that teacher's also have at their disposal a range of 'goods' they can bring to the negotiation table. For example, esteem, support, influence with others, conformity and reputation of the school and community. The ultimate purpose of the exchange process is to reduce resistance to change, amelioration of the power struggle between groups/individuals and a furtherance of the school's interests, rather than those of individual's.

There is a strong case for suggesting that the exercise of leadership falls into two broad categories; on the one hand, implicit in the accountability model previously referred to in this literature review, is the requirement for headteachers to maintain educational control whilst on the other, implied through the transformational leadership construct, are charged with unifying staff, through commitment and enthusiasm, behind the school's vision and aspirations. The resolution of the political dichotomy afforded by these categorisations is dependent on the exercise of leadership styles that lead to alignment between leader and followers, suggesting that leadership styles are neither fixed nor unchanging; being responsive to the micro-political dimensions of power and influence within the schools in which they are exercised.

There is significant scope for leaders to control and modulate the behaviour of individuals or groups through the distribution and exercise of power and influence, enabling the effective management of the resistance to change. Transactional leadership, it could be argued, is a style of leadership most closely aligned to micro-politics and the modification of power and influence (Bush, 2003). As has been

previously discussed, transactional leadership is leadership in which relationships with teachers are based on an exchange for some valued resource. The resource could be in the form of additional teaching materials, responsibility allowances, promotion, more favourable teaching timetable, better classrooms or legitimised power and influence. The headteacher has considerable bargaining power at his/her disposal within the transactional construct. Through transactional exchanges, alliances can be brokered, allegiances forged and resources exchanged in return for support and commitment to the school's vision, aims and aspirations. Transactional leader's, are also political leaders, who must assess the distribution of power and interests. They must 'map the political terrain' (Bolman and Deal, 1991, pp436 – 8).

Transformational leadership, which appeals to the moral and ethical values of followers, is, I would argue, a style that also reflects the political terrain of the establishment within which it operates. My interpretation of political terrain assumes the inclusion of power and influence. Although transformational leadership is claimed to result in followers achieving beyond expected levels of performance as a result of the leaders influence (Bass, 1985) it is also described as despotic by Allix (2000) who argues that the vision or ideology from the leader's personal theory of reality is fallible. Further suggesting that followers are denied the opportunity to evaluate and test the proffered version of reality, which could in certain instances lead to a form of despotic leadership and social organisation and control. The ramifications being that a positional leader, under the auspices of a transformational leadership style, may intentionally or otherwise manipulate or abuse their positional power. As Bolman and Deal (1991) suggest, power needs to be used 'judiciously' and as Busher and Barker (2003) indicate, transformational leadership is just another variation of the transactional exchange.

...also used a variety of transactional strategies for engaging the school community with their policies, it suggests the distinction between transformational and transactional leadership is a false one, both merely representing different strategies for projecting power (Busher and Barker, 2003, p62)

The distribution of leadership (distributed leadership) lends itself to political leadership through the control of power and influence of others within the organisation. In the extreme, it could be viewed as a variant of transactional leadership. Whilst Harris (2004) and others perceive distributed leadership commensurate with competency building I would argue that it could also be used as a means of regulating resistance to change and controlling micro-political groups through limiting power and influence. This is especially the case where it is perceived that the power and influence of the various micro-political groups are counter productive in the context of the aims and objectives of the school.

In their discourse on distributed leadership, Bennett et al (2003), raise issues of teamwork skills, addressing culture and cultural change, facilitating situational and organisational analysis, opening up the choices inherent in developing distributed leadership, the variables such as control and autonomy and determination of the boundary of leadership. This suggests that the distributed leadership model is not a fixed model, in the sense that it cannot be varied to fit the needs of organisational contexts in which it is applied. It can be used, within clearly defined boundaries, anywhere in the organisation and as an analytical tool for determining capacity for leadership development. The issue of control and autonomy is addressed through specifically defined boundaries and the consequent circle of influence that can be designed to ripple outwards or be limited in size according to whether control or autonomy is the desired outcome. It is possible within the distributed leadership model

to envisage a member of staff having their own defined circle of influence whilst at the same time being encompassed within the circle of leadership influence of another member of staff.

The distributed model of leadership could be used to define the boundaries of leadership in a school, enabling both shared and distributive practices to be developed and regulated. The contraction or expansion of boundaries could be determined in the context of organisational needs, staff competencies or through rationalisation of the organisation. The boundaries could be specifically located both in time and space or negotiated and adjusted to accommodate staff needs in return for desired outcomes, thereby facilitating exchange or transactional leadership processes; they could be expanded to reflect increased knowledge, skills and competencies providing a linkage with instructional leadership and professional development; they could be expanded to reflect the level of commitment to the organisation, commensurate with aspects of moral, spiritual and transformational leadership or be mutated, coalesced or contracted to facilitate changing contextual situations or for controlling micro-political elements within an organisation and lastly they could be considered as semi-permeable membranes that allow the flow of information both in and out of the spheres of influence suggesting collaborative leadership principles and practices.

Power and politics are an inherent feature of schools and other organisations. The various leadership constructs discussed in this literature review, including transformational, instructional, transactional and distributed leadership appear to pay minimal attention to the political landscape of organisations or the exercise of power and influence and how they impinges on the day-to-day leadership processes.

Micro-politics exist in schools. It is important to consider how they are manifested and we need to move beyond saying that it is just personality clashes or differences which leads to divisions. (Bolman and Deal, 1991, p200)

The political acts of leadership are therefore important for understanding how schools operate. They provide rich descriptions characterised through recognition of interests of prime motivators and that interests may lead to conflict and how the differential distribution of power plays a significant part in determining outcomes. A strong case can be made for recognising the fact that for many teachers micro-politics fit their every day experiences and for leaders, the effective management of the micro-political context of their schools is central to achieving the aspirations and vision of the schools they lead.

A conceptual model of leadership

Introduction

The literature review has provided useful insights into the perspectives that underpin theories of leadership including amongst others, transformational, instructional, transactional and distributed leadership styles. In addition, the significance of the moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions of leadership together with the importance of the social and micro-political context in which leadership is enacted has been discussed.

It could be argued that the various theoretical leadership constructs provide a functionalist approach to leadership, whereas experience suggests this is inadequate for describing the day-to-day leadership processes in the context of the social, cultural and political climate of schools. The functionalist approach to leadership is supported indirectly through the OFSTED inspection framework and the various training programmes for headteachers. Consequently, a headteacher faces the dichotomy of being accountable to outside agencies

premised on a functionalist approach, whilst at the same time being engaged in influencing the culture of a school through micro-political processes.

Whilst my conceptualisation of leadership embraces the theoretical leadership constructs discussed through the literature review, it also bridges the perceived theory-practice gap between a functionalist approach to leadership and the socio-political reality of leadership in practice. In particular it is grounded in the following assumptions.

1. Schools are dynamic and evolving organisations with unique cultures, social and political constraints, and structures.
2. Leadership is a process inexorably linked to the inequitable distribution of power and influence in a school.
3. Vision is concerned with producing a cultural and political shift and aligning members to a common purpose and commitment.
4. Leadership processes are fluid and dynamic, responsive to the changing social, cultural and political climate, and the changing end-points of the school.
5. The goals and aspirations of a school change over time to reflect the changing internal social, cultural and political climate and changing external constraints.
6. Internal structures and procedures are mechanisms that enable leaders to bestow, reclaim or control legitimised power and influence in a school.
7. Leadership that results in school transformation engages the emotions of the school community through a moral, ethical and spiritual framework.

Implications for leadership practice

What is clear from the perspectives presented in the literature review is that no one particular leadership style can adequately describe the multi-various tasks and responsibilities associated with headship, whereas the conceptualisation of leadership I am proposing embraces a range of leadership styles and perspectives contingent on context, particularly the micro-political context in which it operates. Indeed it could be argued that the dominant leadership style exhibited at any particular moment is a product of both time

and context, implying a fluid and dynamic model of leadership able to accommodate the changing cultural, political and social contexts of schools over time.

Emerging from the various theoretical perspectives is the steer towards shared leadership practices partially driven by the need for teachers to gain ownership of the vision and increase empowerment but also by the pragmatic realisation that the headteacher is not the only expert (that is, having specific knowledge and skills) in the school. I would suggest the degree to which leadership can be shared or distributed depends on capacity and competency development and the level of commitment potential leaders demonstrate to the aspirations and vision of the school.

One of the perceived difficulties with distributed leadership is the ambiguous and dichotomous nature of leadership accountability and hierarchy. The leadership accountability construct articulated through government policies, procedures and monitoring frameworks and the dependence on others to achieve specified targets and objectives legislates against headteachers exercising free-reign in the distribution of power, influence and authority in schools. The theoretical ideal is not matched by the reality of the constraints experienced by practicing headteachers.

Whilst vision has an overriding influence on the cultural climate of a school, the degree to which it is supported by followers depends to a large extent on self-sacrifice and trust and the moral and spiritual dimensions of leadership. Transformational leadership cannot adequately claim to be a leadership style with a unique descriptive identifying code – more accurately it points towards a generic description of leadership that is transforming whilst embracing specific and identifiable leadership styles which change according to the prevailing social, political and cultural contexts in which they are operating.

Transformational leadership, as the name implies, is concerned with changing the culture, climate and goals of the organisation where it occurs. Transformational leadership may mean over time engaging a range of specific leadership styles so that in sum the effect is to produce the changes desired. The visionary statements, articulated by the positional leader, or through shared leadership practices, signals the direction in which the organisation is proposing to move with the strategic action plan and leadership styles the vehicles for ensuring change is enacted over time. In this sense the strategies used and the leadership practices deployed to affect change can be described as transformational leadership.

Through this review I have highlighted the importance of viewing leadership against cultural, political and social contexts. In addition I have expressed some concerns about the gap between theory and practice, particularly the lack of substantive evidence on the strategies deployed by emerging leaders to manage and change cultural perspectives of schools and in removing barriers to change, particularly those associated with the micro-political aspects of the school. The review has also raised issues concerning the focus of the training programmes of the NCSL, NPQH and LPHS courses of study. The evidence points to the case that transformational leadership is not a uniquely defining style of leadership, whereas my conceptualisation of leadership lends itself to an evolving and dynamic description of leadership that embraces a range of leadership styles contextually determined, contingent on desired outcomes, staff competencies, needs and aspirations, micro-political activity and organisational capacity for change.

There is a strong case for reassessing the theoretical interpretation of transformational leadership in order that it encompasses and reflects the pragmatic act of leadership based on practice and articulated through the day-to-day actions of practitioners. The literature review has pointed to some of the inherent weaknesses in the transformational leadership

construct and the assumptions that underpin much of the theoretical framework. If the underlying assumptions are flawed or have limited contextual reality imbedded in them, there are serious implications for the accountability model evidenced through government instruction and the inspection frameworks applied to schools.

The restructuring of the inspection framework in September 2003 has witnessed a significant rise in the number of schools reported as failing or requiring special measures, even where schools had previously been considered either as satisfactory or good. The increase in the number of schools considered to be failing may be a reflection of underperformance in the schools themselves or flaws in the inspection process that has its routes in functionalist theoretical constructs that do not adequately relate to contextually reality. The inflexibility of an accountability model, that is largely driven by a political rather than an educational agenda, and dependent on constructs that are only loosely coupled to pragmatic leadership will inevitably lead to questionable judgements being made.

“Some heads are cruelly excised, yet go on to prove their worth to the system. The head of one of the most difficult, and high-profile, schools in the country was helping the school make good progress...but someone thought otherwise and she was unceremoniously removed with all the attendant media ignominy...it is heartening that chief inspector David Bell has been honest enough to admit that OFSTED teams are currently damning schools unjustifiably...perhaps he will have the good sense to insist that ‘special measures’ joins ‘educationally subnormal’ in the dustbin of educational history”. (Taylor, 2004)

Concluding comment

The aim of this research is to analyse school leadership processes during a period of significant change and development. Transformational leadership is descriptively inadequate, since it is an indefinable commodity with loose boundaries and contextually blurred edges, whereas the conceptualisation of leadership I envisage conveys the essence

of what effective leadership means. The conceptualisation of leadership I have in mind lends itself to the notion that things are being changed, whether school cultures, staff behaviours, classroom practice or management processes; it is a more satisfactory description of the genre of leadership that acts as the change agent in an organisation, embracing multiple and conjoint leadership styles that are contextually driven, responsive to changing circumstances within the loci determined by the visionary aspirations of the school.

The typologies of leadership style identified through this literature review present normative descriptions of the various leadership paradigms that leaders may use for facilitating organisational transformation. The skill of leadership is in knowing which mode of leadership to use and for what purpose and when. The limitation of the theoretical descriptions is that they imply a fixed style for all occasions, whereas I am suggesting that it is possible, and sometimes expedient to adopt different leadership practices at various times or to run concurrently, according to the needs of the organisation and the outcomes that are desired. For example it is possible to use transactional leadership in a localised and specific setting, whilst concurrently using distributive leadership. The various levels within the organisation or school, the degrees of competency and capacity, and changing political climate legislate against a fixed style of leadership.

The daily interactions of leaders in schools leads to constant changes in the way situations are handled, managed and led. In the forgoing sections I have argued that the nature of complex organisations such as schools, where different levels of response are required for each unique situation that takes place, suggests the necessity of a flexible framework of leadership for effective leadership to occur. The leadership model I have in mind could be argued is the leadership of accommodation, where each particular situation determines the

most effective leadership route to follow. The consistency of the leadership style exercised over time being less significant than the aims and purposes of the organisation – encapsulated through the articulation of the vision and mission statements and the consistency of the values and beliefs of the leader underpinning the actions that they take.

The idealised transformational leadership style advocated by Burns (1978) and modified and codified through successive researchers (Bass, 1985; Leithwood, 1994) is an unrealisable ideal. The assumption that followers will transcend self for the good of the organisation, or that transformational leaders are moral agents is undermined by the realisation that all organisations, including schools, are vibrant and complex micro-political communities comprising of individuals with specific agendas and varying needs; where political agendas and power struggles are the norm rather than the exception. In which leaders are no less human than followers, having their own aspirations driven by their inner self-beliefs and values. My conceptualisation of leadership is concerned with accommodating as far as is practical the needs and aspirations of the individual within a transformational-transactional exchange that leads to self fulfilment in return for organisational support and achievement of organisational goals; compliance through the backdoor of bartering, exchange, or trade-offs; a considerable distance from authentic transformational leadership but a reflection of the pragmatic reality of leadership in action.

Research focus areas

This research has been concerned with the analysis of the leadership actions that contributed to the transformation of a school over time and whose cumulative effect can be described and identified as transforming leadership.

Amongst other emerging issues the following key issues formed the focus of the research:

- To what extent, and how the leadership styles accommodated the cultural, political and social constraints of the environment.
- How transforming leadership was developed through the school and what the barriers to its development were.
- How vision was articulated and embedded in the culture and work of the school.
- To what extent leadership changed the culture of the school.
- The part transactional exchanges played in the transforming leadership process and how the micro-politics of change were managed.
- The constraints of competency and capacity on the distribution of leadership, in particular how these were related to the evolving boundaries of power and influence in the school.

Chapter 4 Research Methodology

Introduction

The aim of this research is to analyse school leadership processes during a period of significant change and development. The purpose of the research is to provide an understanding of school leadership grounded in practice, underpinned by the various theoretical leadership constructs that draws on established leadership theories, in order to give to new perspectives and insights and suggesting further avenues for research and development.

In this chapter, I describe and justify the methods used in the research, the research design, methods of data collection and analysis and provide a critique of the research instruments used.

Research questions

The rationale for the research questions rests on the assumption that leadership development in a school is context dependent and needs driven. If the assumption is valid then it follows that modes of school leadership are dynamic and fluid as they change to accommodate the evolving contexts in which they operate. It could thus be argued that particular modes of leadership may be inappropriate in certain circumstances and to advocate a specific mode of leadership irrespective of contexts and needs may be inapt. The focus of the research questions in this study is to determine how school leadership evolved, especially in a school that has undergone sustained and substantive improvements in performance. In particular, I wish to explore the nature of the leadership at specific stages of schools' development, and how organisational capacity for change was developed. The key research questions are:

- How does individual and organisational capacity for change, constrain or advance the development of school leadership?
- How is capacity for change developed?
- In what ways do leadership practices evolve as capacity for change develops?
- In which ways do the school leadership change as contextual circumstances change?
- How are the improvements in the schools' performance related to specific leadership actions and practice?
- What is the role of vision in the development of leadership and how is it articulated?

Methodological considerations

The aim of this research is to analyse school leadership processes during a period of significant change and development. Further, through the understanding and knowledge gained I aim to interpret the data from the case study school using the theoretical constructs and structures outlined in the literature review. The purpose of the research design is to provide trustworthy accounts of the structures, processes and relationships that enabled cultural change to occur in the case study school, and through critical analysis relate these to existing theoretical ideas.

A case study is an empirical study within a localised boundary in its natural context and is designed to inform the judgements and decisions of practitioners and policy makers or theoreticians (Bassey, 2002). It is designed to enable the researcher to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors and whilst interpretive and subjective, has the strength of being able to investigate and report on the dynamic and unfolding human interactions and events in a unique setting.

In this research, an idiographic methodology would be consistent with the subjective nature of human relations and interactions and social reality. The implied nominalist ontology suggests the methodological approach used should be characterised by research techniques designed to elicit personal constructs, narrative accounts and

participant observations (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). A case study, would match these requirements.

The rationale for adopting a case study methodological approach to this research rests on the ideas put forward by Allix and Gronn (2005) and others that leadership acts are those that influence what information is used, and how it is used and therefore leaders have a major and consistent impact on the creation of social knowledge and order. The natural extension of this point of view is that the methodological research framework for studying the concept of leadership must be situational and there can be no fixed ontologies of leadership theory. Understanding the context therefore, is crucial to theory building (Allix and Gronn, 2005) and my research reflects this epistemological and ontological perspective.

Where researchers hold the ontological assumption that reality is the result of individual cognition and knowledge is based on experience and is essentially personal in nature, their methodologies will be characterised by a naturalistic and interpretive methodology as they seek to determine the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the environment to which they belong. The assumption lends itself to idiographic research focused on the particular and individual. The focus on the individual interpretation of events does not however preclude a sense of shared meaning and a collective understanding being developed.

Linking the theoretical constructs of leadership analysed in the literature review to the conceptual interpretations of the leadership processes in the contextual setting of the case study school presents an interesting challenge. It involves critically analysing the largely positivist assumptions about leadership processes and relating these to the range of meanings and interpretations of the participants and researcher in the socio-political

context of the case study school. Nevertheless, as Yin (1994) argues, analytical generalisation is an appropriate method of generating theories where previously developed theories are used as a template with which to compare empirical results of the case study.

The case study

The case study used in this research is based on an 11 – 18 secondary school in South Wales. The localised boundary is the school and the defined period for the case study was 1998 – 2004. The aim of the case study has been to analyse the leadership process in the case study school during a period of significant change and development. The purpose of the case study has been to provide a pragmatic approach to leadership, underpinned by the various theoretical leadership constructs, leading to new perspectives and insights and suggesting further avenues for research and development. Further, it has been my intention through the case study to improve action through theoretical understanding rather than theoretical knowledge. The case study has enabled a unique example of a real situation to be described and how ideas and abstract principles can fit together.

In producing the narrative account care has been exercised to avoid the inherent weaknesses of case study methodology, namely selective reporting, observer bias, subjectivity and anecdotal commentary through effective triangulation using a range of data sets.

The research enabled a longitudinal study of the way in which leadership processes emerged during a period of substantive change and development in the case study school in the period 1998 – 2004. The research design enabled complex dynamic and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in a unique

setting to be investigated. For the purposes of this research, where a rich and vivid description of the emerging leadership processes was a desired outcome, the case study design seemed the most appropriate vehicle to serve this end. The research instruments used, semi-structured interviews, questionnaire based survey and document analysis enabled the research questions to be answered. Specifically, the semi-structured interviews enabled the way in which leadership processes developed during the period the research was concerned with to be explored through first hand accounts of staff working at the school encompassed by the research. Examination of contemporaneous and archive documentation, including policies and procedures, staff training notes, subject reviews and communications enabled a picture to be built of the way staff competencies had been developed and the capacity for change augmented. Lastly, the questionnaire-based survey enabled the staff's perspectives on leadership, vision, strategic planning, accountability and developing potential to be investigated. The range of data collected through the research instruments firstly, ensured effective triangulation and secondly, allowed the research questions to be answered with confidence. The three research instruments used for data collection are outlined in detail in the research design section of this chapter.

Research design

There were three methods of data collection in the research design: semi-structured interviews (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992), questionnaire-based survey (Wilson and McLean, 1994; Bell, 2002) and document analysis (Platt, 1981). These are explained more fully under methods of data collection and analysis. The purpose of the three elements was to produce an authentic account of leadership in practice that was credible, transferable, confirmable and dependable (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994) and to

build a rich picture of the process of transformation in the case study school. The three research design elements of semi-structured interviews, questionnaire and documentation analysis were planned to provide 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973) of the contextual situation and emerging transforming leadership practices. My Guided Doctorate in Education Programme learning set was used to validate data collected. This was achieved by sharing, with the guided doctorate group, contemporaneous and archive documentary material from the case study school and comparing their interpretation and analysis of the content with my interpretation. The purpose was to provide further triangulation and to test the trustworthiness of the research conclusions.

The aim of the questionnaire-based survey was to analyse the extent to which particular leadership traits were evidenced in the school and the document analysis together with the semi-structured interviews was used to explore how the leadership of the school had evolved through a period of substantial change. In addition, the semi-structured interviews provided data for comparisons to be made between leadership practices of the current and previous headteacher and any changes in leadership practices over time to be mapped.

The data collection methods consisted of content analysis of documents, questionnaire to 25 members of the teaching staff and semi-structured interviews with 15 members of the teaching staff, seven pupils, two support staff and three governors (two of whom were parents). The content analysis focused on a range of school documentation including: inspection reports (1994 & 2000), minutes of meetings, School Development Plans (1998 – 2001, 2002 – 2005 and 1994 – 1997), school publications, press cuttings, Welsh Assembly Government school performance data and staff professional development portfolios. Included in the 15 members of the teaching staff

interviewed, were 10 teachers who had been at the school for greater than seven years so that comparisons of leadership styles of the current and previous headteacher could be drawn and changes in leadership practices identified.

Ethical considerations

Carrying out a case study carries with it a number of ethical considerations. In this section I outline these considerations and the steps taken to meet rigorous ethical standards in carrying out the case study.

I bore in mind adherence to the BERA ethical standards at all stages of the research process. Permission was sought and given by the Governing Body prior to embarking on the research project. There was no need to seek permission from the unitary authority since the school was self-governing having Foundation Status (established through statutory instruments in September 1999). In order that the Governing Body could make an informed decision they were provided with an outline of the purpose, research procedures and the ethical considerations that would be applied throughout. It was agreed, that at a later stage, the outcomes of the research would be shared with the Governing Body. The ethics of respect for truth (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and respect for persons (Bassey, 1999) were central considerations in the research design. Informed consent was obtained and confidentiality was respected.

Informed consent of participants

In order to carry out the case study research obtaining consent and co-operation of participants was necessary. The principle of informed consent arises from the subject's right to freedom and self-determination (Cohen et al, 2000) and was a guiding principle applied to this research. Informed consent according to Diener and Crandall (1978)

involves the four dimensions of competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension. Where competence implies the ability to make informed decisions based on the facts provided; voluntarism ensuring participants have the freedom to participate in the research or not; full information implies that consent is fully informed; and comprehension that the participants fully understand the nature of the research.

In the context of this case study the four dimensions identified by Diener and Crandall (1978) were met through the preliminary discussions with all staff, teaching and non-teaching, to explain the nature of the research being undertaken and its purpose. Specifically, the research design and procedures were outlined and an opportunity to seek clarification provided. Additionally, the professional development benefits of the research to the individual were briefly outlined including, self-development, formative evaluation, organisational feedback and policy-making. It was made clear that participation in the research, through semi-structured interviews or completion of the questionnaire-based survey was completely optional, ensuring freedom to participate or not. Subsequently, all members of staff (including teaching and non-teaching) expressed a willingness to participate in the research. At the same meeting, it was made clear that a participant was free to withdraw consent and discontinue participation at any time without prejudice or explanation. A commitment to share the findings of the research by placing the final thesis on the school's intranet was also made.

Anonymity and confidentiality

The importance of anonymity is that it should not be possible to identify participants through information provided by them. The obligation to protect the anonymity of research participants and to keep research data confidential is all-inclusive (Frankfort-

Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992). In this research complete anonymity was guaranteed for the participants completing the questionnaire-based survey since no identifying marks (names or coding symbols) were included. However, for those participating in the semi-structured interviews, a face-to-face interview, could not, by definition, be anonymous, although confidentiality was assured. Where quotations from the semi-structured interviews were used in the body of the report participants were referred to only by the initials of their formal roles in school. For example members of the Leadership Group (which included deputy heads, subject leaders and heads of division) are referenced by the letters LG, similarly Heads of Year by HY, Subject Leaders by SL, support staff by SS, parent governor by PG, staff governor by SG and so on. A similar system was used where extracts from school documentation were used in the context of the written report, additionally ensuring that subject names were unidentifiable since this would automatically reveal the identity of the personnel involved. Both methods used for protecting the identity of individuals and subjects were outlined at the staff meeting referred to earlier. I was conscious of the need to respect anonymity and confidentiality since in any organisation members have considerable vested professional interests that an infringement of anonymity and confidentiality would place at risk. Interestingly, members of staff (teaching and non-teaching), whilst concerned with respecting personal anonymity and confidentiality, were much less concerned with preventing the identity of the case study school from becoming known. The consensus was that the school had much to celebrate and therefore there was little need to keep its identity hidden, although in the report the name is not revealed.

Insider researcher

I anticipated a degree of tension and conflicting loyalties between my own interests as an insider researcher and those of my colleagues who were participants in the research. There were both advantages and disadvantages of being an insider researcher. Firstly, there is the ethical issue of how the researcher intends to use the information gathered and secondly, how the information could be used within the micro-political processes of the school (Busher, 2002). Thirdly, the organisational status and power of the insider researcher could influence participants' responses and interpretations of events. Consequently, as the insider-researcher in this case study, it was important to put in place safeguards to ensure the internal reliability and validity of the data collected and the trustworthiness of any conclusions drawn. However, there were advantages. Firstly, the insights afforded by being an insider researcher added a richer dimension to the research than could have been achieved by an external researcher, and secondly prolonged involvement with the organisation facilitated an empathy and understanding of the situation through the eyes of the participants; in keeping with the interpretative tradition of educational research.

The issues of subjectivity and trustworthiness were addressed by using evidence from a wide range of sources. Where possible, statements made in semi-structured interviews were cross-referenced with contemporaneous and archive documentation relating to the specific aspects discussed in interview and also cross-referencing statements made by the participants strengthened the trustworthiness of the case study. Cross-referencing allowed the validity of statements to be tested. Those members of staff interviewed as part of the research were, in the main, senior leaders and managers in the case study school. Consequently, the issue of position and power within the school was not perceived as presenting a significant problem, since the majority of the participants had

worked closely with the insider researcher, at senior management level, for at least six years and had established close working relationships with them.

In writing the report the need to substantiate views and opinions has been born in mind and any relevant supporting evidence and documentation is fully referenced. The triangulation of data, using a range of independent sources, was used to validate the reflective account of the insider researcher, the headteacher. Appropriate safeguards have been put in place to ensure validity and reliability of the personal reflections of the headteacher.

Methodological triangulation (Bush, 2002) was used to look at the same issue from the different data collection methods in order to improve the trustworthiness of any interpretations and conclusions drawn. Limiting the data collection to one particular method would have inevitably compromised the trustworthiness of any conclusions drawn because of the limited view a single perspective provides. In describing research methods, Smith (1975) indicates that they are never neutral in representing the world of experience and Lin (1976) suggests the need to be confident that the data generated are not simply artefacts of one specific method of collection. Methodological triangulation ensured bias and possible subjectivity identified by Smith and Lin was limited. The extensive level of documentation examined, together with the outcomes of the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews enabled effective methodological triangulation of the data to take place so that any findings and conclusions could be given with a high degree of confidence. Within the documentation data set, it was possible to cross-reference information contained within various documents, for example Subject Reviews with minutes of subject department meetings and school

development plan, allowing further triangulation, adding to the strength of the interpretation of the data.

My Guided Doctorate in Education Programme learning set was used to validate data collected. The University of Glamorgan operates the programme for those wishing to follow a doctoral programme as part-time students. The group met approximately once each term to discuss the research being undertaken and to share with other participants any significant findings from the research. Validation of my interpretation and analysis of the various documents examined as part of my research was achieved by sharing with the guided doctorate group contemporaneous and archive documentary material from the case study school. Comparisons between the group's interpretations and analysis of the documentation and my own were made. The purpose was to provide further triangulation and to test the reliability and validity of any conclusions and inferences drawn.

Participants voice and recall of past events

The case study research made use of two main primary sources of data; that is those items that were original to the situation under study. The first, included the documentation referred to later in this chapter and the second, the oral accounts given through the semi-structured interviews with those members of staff who had been at the school for seven or more years, who were witnesses to the changing and unfolding leadership processes over the time this research was concerned with. The semi-structured interviews fall into Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) typology of retrospective life history, where the participant reconstructs past events from present feelings and interpretation of the individual concerned. The use of this instrument raises questions about the trustworthiness of the data since it depends on how well participants

accurately recall past events, particularly where the time between past and present is long – in this case at least seven years where participants were being asked to recall the leadership style of the previous headteacher (PT). The fact that semi-structured interviews were carried out with ten members of staff who met the criteria of having worked at the school for at least seven years, enabled multiple versions of the same events to be told from an individual participants' perspective. Cross-referencing participants' interviews confirmed a consistency in the accounts provided. The uniformity of the accounts concurring with the findings of McCulloch et al (2000), who argue participants' memory is fairly reliable especially when it concerns important events. Additionally, the historical documentation relating to the period provided further evidence for the reliability of the recall of those being interviewed. Interviewees were provided with an opportunity to verify statements when the research was in draft form.

In addition to interviewing ten members of staff who had experienced the leadership of both the PH and CH, a further 17 participants were included in the semi-structured interviews who had only experienced the leadership of the CH. The participants included teaching staff, non-teaching staff, governors and pupils. The purpose was two-fold, firstly participants were selected to represent the voice (Usher, 2000) of members of the school through a range of different perspectives and secondly, it strengthened the trustworthiness of the study by allowing further triangulation to occur.

Access to data did not present an issue since the positional authority of the insider researcher in the school enabled unrestricted access to archive and contemporaneous material.

Limitations of the research design

The research design consisted of three instruments for collecting data: questionnaire-based survey, semi-structured interview and analysis of archive and contemporaneous documentation. The purpose was to provide trustworthy data from which valid conclusions could be drawn and a narrative account written. The aim of the research was to analyse the leadership process in a school during a period of significant change and development. As is common with all research, there were a number of research design limitations that I highlight in this section.

The questionnaire-based survey was directed towards the teaching staff of the case study school and designed to obtain the views of the participants about the leadership practices exercised in the school. The sampling fraction of a one in two was used and the questionnaires ensured complete anonymity; I was unable to discern the identity of the member of staff who had completed a questionnaire. There are a number of limitations of this research instrument. Firstly, because of the anonymity of the questionnaire, it was impossible for follow up work with the participants. For example, some questionnaire responses were markedly different to others but because I was unaware of the participants name I was unable to pursue further lines of enquiry with them. This may have revealed different aspects and understanding. Secondly, the questionnaire-based survey was only directed towards teaching staff. On reflection, this narrowed the range of perspectives on leadership in the case study school to those directly involved with teaching and learning, the responses to the questionnaire therefore reflecting only a teacher's point of view. This is an important limitation since in the case study school there were non-teaching members of staff who had been at the school during the period covered by this research. They, as with the teaching staff, will hold particular views and opinions about the school and how it is managed and led

which perhaps should have been taken into consideration in this research. A similar criticism could be made through the non-involvement of members of the governing body in the questionnaire-based survey. Although permission to carry out the research had been obtained from the governing body, on reflection it was an oversight not to have included some of the members in the research sample. A number of governors have been members of the governing body since the school became Grant Maintained in 1991, including the chair and former chair of the governing body. Although they had limited experience of the day-to-day operation of the school they nevertheless have first hand knowledge of the developments within the school over a substantive period of time, including that covered by this research.

The document analysis included a wide range of contemporaneous and archive material. The inclusion was designed to add further supportive evidence to the data collected through the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaire-based survey. Inevitably, the selection of the documentation used and the interpretation of the information contained in them are open to subjectivity and selectivity. The predisposition of a researcher to a particular theory or idea can lead to them seeking evidence that can be used to support what they are advocating. It is almost impossible to remove bias from case study research that sets out to establish particular trends and patterns. Embarking on a case study infers that the researcher has already determined there is something important to find and per se will find it. Additionally, the selective use of extracts from documentation, taken out of the context, can be used to support in a convincing way any particular theory the researcher is proposing. In this research, steps were taken to ameliorate possible bias and selectivity through peer group review and cross-referencing with statements arising from the semi-structured interviews and responses to the questionnaire-based sample. Although it would be unrealistic to claim

that the choice of which documentation to include and cite from, was completely free from bias or subjectivity.

Whilst I have pointed to some research design limitations I would argue that they have not compromised the overall integrity and validity of the research and its findings. The reasons for coming to this conclusion are based on the internal and external consistency of the evidence collected. In particular, the use of external reports and data adds weight to the findings based on the internal use of documentation, semi-structured interviews and questionnaire analysis. The research has drawn on a number of external verifiable data sets including ESTYN inspection reports, the annual performance reviews produced by the unitary authorities advisory service, Welsh Assembly Government statistics and value added measures produced by MidYIS. Whilst confident that the research findings present a reliable account of the leadership processes during a period of significant change and development I acknowledge that a greater richness to the narrative account and interpretation could have been achieved through addressing the research limitations outlined above.

Methods of data collection and analysis

Questionnaire-based survey of staff

Introduction

A seven-point rating questionnaire Likert (1932) was distributed to every other member of staff, based on an alphabetical listing of the teaching staff at the school. It was felt that a sampling fraction of one in two would provide a representative cross-section of the teaching staff in the school. Having decided the sampling fraction the participants were selected on a systematic basis (Fogelman, 2002). That is every

second person on the staff list was chosen starting with the first name on the list. The sample included 15 female and 10 male members of teaching staff with an average of 15.8 years teaching experience and an average of 7.8 years in the case study school. The average age of the teachers completing the questionnaire was 40.1 years; 21 (84%) of the sample were in receipt of responsibility points, 36% were main stream teachers, 36% held management responsibilities (for example Subject Leader), 12% had senior management positions and 16% held pastoral posts of responsibility. The minimum number of years in the school was three and the maximum 13; the minimum length of teaching experience was also 3 years and the maximum 36 years.

Members of staff were invited to see me privately if they had any concerns or questions relating to the research being undertaken. A two-week period between the initial staff briefing and distribution of the questionnaire was made available for this to occur. None of the members of staff asked for their names to be removed from the staff list. The questionnaire was distributed by one of the secretaries and 14 days were allowed for completion and return. There were no means of identifying the members of staff who had completed a particular questionnaire since there were no identifying marks on them and they were handed in anonymously to one of the school secretaries. The school secretary compiled the teaching profile of the 25 staff members before distributing the questionnaires. 25 questionnaires were distributed and 23 completed questionnaires returned (92% response rate).

The questionnaire consisted of 110 questions (appendix A) allocated to specific traits of school leadership, which were randomly distributed through the questionnaire. The traits covered by the questionnaire are shown in figure 9.

Leadership Aspect	Number of questions
Analytical Thinking	8
Challenge and Support	8
Developing Potential	6
Drive for Improvement	6
Holding People Accountable	8
Impact and Influence	5
Information Seeking	8
Initiative	6
Personal Conviction	9
Respect for Others	8
Strategic Thinking	8
Team Working	8
Transformational Leadership	9
Understanding Others	6
Understanding the Environment	7

Figure 9 Leadership traits covered by the questionnaire-based survey

The questionnaire used in the research project was an adapted version of the Context for School Improvement Questionnaire developed by Hay/McBer for the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) organised by the National Assembly for Wales (Hay/McBer, 2001).

The models of excellence for school leaders was developed by Hay McBer following extensive research into the characteristics of high performing school leaders in different settings (Hay/McBer 1998). From this, they determined the range of characteristics associated with high performing school leaders and arranged them under various cluster headings described by various levels within the cluster. Algorithms

were then determined for each cluster in which the minimal levels necessary for effectiveness within that cluster were determined. These were used within the LPSH programme to provide a profile for the participants, giving an indication of the levels within each cluster being achieved and the future developments that were necessary. For example, group 1 contained the cluster/competencies strategic thinking and impact and influence, each with a four level descriptor attached. Group 3 contained transformational leadership and holding people accountable. The four-descriptor levels attached to transformational leadership were:

- Keeps people informed
- Promotes organisational effectiveness
- Tends the team
- Gains commitment to a compelling vision

For the purpose of this research it was felt these were too narrow, inadequately reflecting the theoretical construct of transformational leadership, in particular the eight domains proposed by Leithwood (1994). Consequently the Hay McBer questionnaire was modified to accommodate these eight domains by deleting some items from the Hay/McBer questionnaire and replacing with questions aligned to the Leithwood domains.

Construction of the questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire-based survey was to gauge the perceptions that staff had of the leadership of the school. As has been previously mentioned (p171), the questionnaire was modelled on the LPSH questionnaire, which was designed to elicit the perceptions of the members of staff of a school about current leadership practices, and future practices that staff would ideally like to see developed (Hay/McBer, 2001). Whilst the Hay-McBer questionnaire conceptualised the various leadership practices

under specific traits, the style and format of the questions did not in every instance fully meet the research needs of the case study; although they were an invaluable starting point for the construction of the final version of the questionnaire.

The nine leadership traits identified through the Hay-McBer questionnaire included strategic planning, impact and influence, drive for improvement, personal conviction, transformational leadership, holding people accountable, initiative, information seeking and analytical thinking (Hay/McBer, 2001). In constructing the questionnaire the questions in each of these groupings were analysed and where necessary edited or reformulated to meet the needs of the research instrument in this case study. Some examples of the reformulated questions were:

Hay-McBer question	Questionnaire-based survey
Sets a personal example of how he wants others to act	Sets a personal example of how he wants others to act and demonstrates high expectations
Takes action to ensure individuals and teams work co-operatively to make the school more effective	Creates professional development opportunities to enable school objectives to be achieved
Is decisive in a crisis situation	Is decisive and strategic
Considers multiple possible implications from actions or decisions	Makes extensive use of data to formulate action plans for future improvement
Measures and tracks own and others' performance against objectives	Measures and tracks own and others' performance against specific objectives and targets
Uses deliberate and systematic influence over an extended period to secure others' support	Uses deliberate and systematic influence over an extended period to secure others' support

Whereas the Hay-McBer analysis was designed to determine the perceived level of competency to produce a headteacher competency portfolio, the purpose of the questionnaire-based survey was to measure the extent to which participants perceived the degree to which leadership traits identified by the LPSH programme, were exhibited by the headteacher in practice.

A draft version of the questions to be used in the questionnaire-based survey was trialed with four members of the leadership group. The purpose of the pilot was to check the wording of each question and to report on ambiguities, mistakes or grammatical errors. The feedback from the leadership group led to some small adjustments, mainly grammatical, before the final version was produced. The four members of leadership group piloting the questionnaire undertook to keep the questions confidential in order to safeguard the integrity of the research instrument. Although the pilot group were advised that the purpose was to measure the staff's perceptions of the leadership traits exhibited by the headteacher, the questions that related to specific traits being measured, were not identified to the group. It was not known whether subsequently members of the leadership group completed the final version of the questionnaire. Any completed pilot questionnaires were destroyed once the task of amending them had been completed; the results for the piloted questionnaire did not form part of the data set.

Analysis of the questionnaires

There were two ways in which analysis of the questionnaire-based survey could have been carried out. The first, would have been at the individual question level and the

second, would have been at the level of the responses of groups of questions corresponding to the various characteristic leadership traits previously mentioned. For the purpose of this research the second method of analysis was considered more useful than the first. The reason was that the purpose of the questionnaire was to measure to what extent the various traits were perceived as part of the repertoire of every day practices of the headteacher. Within each trait grouping, judgements to particular questions may have produced varying responses but it was the combination of the responses to individual questions that contributed to the overall rating for a particular trait.

The analysis of the strategic thinking trait is demonstrated below.

Rating	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	N
Totals	22	38	36	13	4	1	1	115
Overall Percentages	19.1%	33.0%	31.3%	11.3%	3.5%	0.9%	0.9%	
Cumulative Percentages	19.1%	52.2%	83.5%	94.8%	98.3%	99.1%	100.0%	

The ratings A, B, C, D, E, F and G refer to the statements very strongly agree (A), strongly agree (B), to very strongly disagree (G). N represents the total number of responses to the questions within the trait group. In the example shown 22/115 (19.1%) responses indicated that they very strongly agreed that the leadership practices demonstrated strategic thinking, whereas 1/115 (0.9%) very strongly disagreed. The last row of the table provides the cumulative percentage. In the example shown, 83.5% of the responses to the questions located within this group considered that leadership practices demonstrated the leadership trait of strategic thinking, 11.3% were unsure (rating D) and 5.3% disagreed (ratings E, F and G). Each of the nine groupings were analysed using the same method outlined above.

One of the aims of the questionnaire was to analyse the extent to which a transformational leadership style was evident in the school. The questions used for this purpose focused on the eight dimensions of vision, school goals, intellectual stimulus, individualised support, organisational values, expectations and school culture since these have been identified by Leithwood (1994) and others as synonymous with a transformational leadership style. For example, question 103, 'communicates a compelling vision of what is to be achieved and inspires others to achieve it' relates to the dimension of vision, a characteristic of a transformational leadership style.

The questions designed to measure the to which extent transformational leadership is evidenced in the case study school are given in Figure 10 together with the corresponding Leithwood (1994) domain.

Question	Transformational Leadership	Corresponding Leithwood domain
81	Establishes clear targets and school goals	Establishing school goals
87	Creates professional development opportunities to enable school objectives to be achieved	Creating a productive school culture; providing intellectual stimulus
5	Speaks positively about the school and promotes its image to others	Building school vision
41	Develops structures for fostering participation in school decisions	Developing structures to foster participation in school decisions; providing intellectual stimulus
82	Models best practice and important organizational values	Modelling best practices and important organisational values
34	Sets a personal example of how he wants others to act and demonstrates high expectations	Demonstrating high performance expectations; creating a productive school culture
72	Takes personal responsibility for ensuring that the school or team meets their objectives	Offering individualised support
16	Provides intellectual stimulus and fosters a productive and learning culture	Providing intellectual stimulus
103	Communicates a compelling vision of what is to be achieved and inspires others to achieve it	Building school vision

Figure 10 Relationship between question number, transformational leadership question and Leithwood domain.

The outcomes from the questionnaire-based survey allowed cross-referencing with the perceptions of the insider researcher about their leadership style and those revealed through the documentation analysis and semi-structured interviews. It provided a means of further triangulation of the data and a strengthening of the trustworthiness of the written account and any conclusions drawn. A total of 2530 question responses were analysed as part of the questionnaire-based survey.

It was only after the questionnaires had been completed and returned that the traits were decoded, question responses being grouped according to the traits they were designed to investigate. The participants had no previous knowledge of the various traits or which question was designed to explore which trait, ensuring the integrity and validity of the data collected. Each question asked for a response on a seven-point scale, ranging from very strongly agrees to very strongly disagree.

Critique of questionnaire-based survey of staff

One of the weaknesses of the Likert (1932) scales is that whilst they may arrange responses from the highest to the lowest the intervals between each may not be the same. It cannot be assumed on a seven-point scale that the highest rating (very strongly agree) is seven times higher than the lowest rating (very strongly disagree). Neither is there a reliable way of knowing whether the respondents are telling the truth, some respondents may deliberately falsify their replies and have hidden agendas. In analysing the responses grouping them according to whether they generally agree with a statement or generally disagree can produce some distortion to the data interpretation. For example, 10 respondents may in general agree with a statement (ratings 1, 2 and 3) and 8 respondents may in general disagree with the statement (ratings 5, 6 and 7) and a conclusion may be drawn overall that the respondents agree with the statement given. However, it may be that of the 8 disagreeing, 6 register in the category of 'very strongly disagree' whilst the 10 agreeing do so at the lowest rating for agreement. It could be argued that those staff who were perhaps ambivalent (lowest rating for agreement), coupled with those who registered 'very strongly disagree' indicate not agreement but disagreement with the statement. Rating scales are limited in their usefulness by their fixity of response caused by the need to select from a given choice

(Cohen et al, 2000). Notwithstanding the inherent weaknesses of Likert ratings the questionnaire nevertheless provided a source of data that helped build a ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) of the processes of transformation in the case study school.

Through the questionnaire-based survey I was aiming to gain a sense of colleagues’ experiences in order to add to and enrich the whole data set. It was not my intention to establish through the questionnaire some objective or fixed reality. I would argue that the questionnaire was a valid instrument for the purpose outlined, in that the analysis provided an overview of the leadership aspects perceived to be present in the school, producing an enriched contextual understanding of the case study school.

Semi-structured interviews

Survey sample

In total 15 members of the teaching staff were interviewed, ten of the staff having been at the school for a minimum of seven years. It was important to include members of the teaching staff who had been at the school spanning the period of the previous and current headteacher, in order that comparisons could be drawn between the two. The ten members of teaching staff had varying degrees of seniority and management responsibility in the school, ranging from deputy head to classroom teacher, the profile of the ten staff members is provided in Figure 11.

Teacher	M/F	Years in school
1	M	13
2	M	13
3	M	10
4	F	13
5	F	7
6	F	9
7	M	8

8	F	13
9	F	13
10	F	13

Figure 11 Profile of members of staff participating in the semi-structured interviews.

In order to broaden the range of perspectives provided by the members of the teaching staff who had been in the school for seven or more years, five teaching staff who had been at the school for less than seven years, three governors (including two parent governors), two support staff and seven pupils from years 11-13 were also included in the semi-structured interview sample. Of the three governors, two had been associated with the school since 1991 and therefore had first-hand experience of how the case study school had progressed and developed over a substantial period of time. One of the support staff had been in the school for more than seven years and the other for four years. All the year 11 - 13 pupils had been in the school for at least five years.

The main purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to elicit answers to the research questions. In particular, those related to the way in which the leadership of the school changed over time and how the participants perceived specific leadership actions had contributed to the substantive improvement in the schools' performance during the period this research was concerned with. In addition, participants were questioned about the effectiveness of professional development during this period and whether or not they considered it had contributed to the development of particular skills and knowledge that they could utilize in their role in the school. The purpose here was to ascertain the way in which capacity for change had developed in the school and the impact the participants felt this had had on the performance of the school. All participants were also asked what they considered the vision of the school to be and

how the vision had changed over the period the research was concerned with. Responses to this line of enquiry were followed through with an exploration of whether or not the participants felt that the vision had been instrumental in changing the expectations of the school and had contributed to the sustained and substantive improvement in the schools' performance over time. Together with the other data sets, a comprehensive picture was built about the way in which the school had progressed and developed between 1998 and 2004 and in particular, how capacity development and leadership actions had played a significant role in the process.

The average age of those in the sample was 46.5 years with an average of 20.6 years in the teaching profession and an average of 11.2 years in the case study school. Six of the sample (60%) had been at the school since becoming grant maintained in September 1991. Three (30%) had only taught in the school since qualifying with 70% having previously taught in other schools prior to appointment at the school. All but one respondent were in receipt of at least one management point for specific responsibilities in the school. In the sample, 30% held pastoral responsibilities, 40% senior management roles, 20% curriculum management responsibilities and one (10%) was a subject teacher with no specific areas of responsibility outside classroom practice. The fact that the sample needed to include teaching staff who had been at the school during the period of the previous and current head meant that the age profile and length of teaching experience was slightly higher than that for the teaching staff of the school as a whole. Inevitably it was also skewed towards those with management responsibilities since at a minimum they would have been in the teaching profession for seven years and therefore likely to have been promoted in that time. The wealth of teaching experience and especially the fact that 60% had been in the school since

becoming grant maintained provided valuable historic accounts and comparisons to be drawn with how the school had developed pre- and post-1998. Cross-referencing the various separate accounts given during the semi-structured interviews enabled validation and reliability of the information provided to be tested. There was some overlap between those involved with the semi-structured interviews and those staff completing the staff based questionnaire survey, although the degree of overlap could not be specified due to the anonymity of the returned questionnaires.

Critique of semi-structured interviews

The reliability of interviews can be undermined by bias, subjectivity, hidden agendas, inaccurate recall of events and giving responses that you think the researcher wishes to hear and the interpretation that the researcher places on the information given (Cohen et al, 2000). The essence of reliability can be regarded as a fit between the researcher's record of data and what actually occurs in practice; that is, a demonstrable convergence between the two. The sources of bias are the characteristics of the interviewer, the characteristics of the respondent, and the substantive content of the questions. More particularly, these will include the attitudes, opinions and expectations of the interviewer and the tendency for the interviewer to seek answers that support preconceived notions. Additionally, misconceptions may arise on the part of the interviewer about what the respondent is saying and equally misunderstandings may occur on the part of the respondent about what is being asked.

"Interviewers and interviewees alike bring their own, often unconscious experiential and biographical baggage with them into the interview situation". (Cohen et al, p121)

It is inevitable that because interviews are interpersonal interactions the researcher will have some influence and impact on the process and consequently on the data being

collected. The fact that the interviewer had positional authority within the case study school could, unless appropriate steps were taken, invalidate the data collected. For this reason it was essential to seek additional sources of data to test whether there was convergence between the picture emerging from the semi-structured interviews and practice, thereby confirming the reliability and validity of the data collected. The major source of this data was through archive material including minutes of staff meetings, governing body meetings, inspection report for 1994, school development plan for 1994 – 1997 and the staff manual in use prior to 1998. Hence distancing the interviewer from the events during this period and affording opportunities for methodological triangulation of the data.

The documents were shared with my Guided Doctorate in Education Programme learning set in order that informed opinion about the leadership style of the school prior to 1998 could be ascertained and used to validate the outcomes and interpretations of the semi-structured interviews and to guard against any bias by the researcher in his interpretation of the archive material. In addition, to improve control over reliability, the same format and sequence of words and questions were used for each respondent. Indeed, Silverman (1993) suggests that it is important for each interviewee to understand the question in the same way if reliability is to be achieved, although acknowledges that this also limits the more open-ended interviews where the respondent is encouraged to articulate their unique interpretation and definition of the situation.

Reliability can also be compromised through the inappropriate use of leading questions. That is those questions that make assumptions about the interviewees and their views and opinions – effectively putting words in to the interviewees' mouths.

The interviewer who has preconceived interpretations or wishes to use responses to support particular theories or hypothesis can drive these consciously or unconsciously thereby placing the reliability and validity of responses at risk.

The positional authority and hence power is a further constraint that needs careful consideration and control. In this case study the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is that of employer and employee and consequently there is a real threat that the process could be compromised if the respondent feels in any way intimidated by the relationship or considers that anything said may reflect on his/her future development in the school. To a certain extent these have been ameliorated by the open working relationships evidenced in the school and the open door policy of the employer over a number of years. Nevertheless the issue points to the need for effective triangulation methods being adopted so that convergent and confirmatory evidence and data is collected from a range of sources and validated by external peer group scrutiny.

The issue of reliability does not reside solely in the preparations for and conduct of the interview; they extend to the ways in which the interviews are analysed (Cohen et al, p125). The problems stem from selected transcription of the interview and the interpretation placed on what has been said. In an attempt to minimise likely bias or incorrect interpretations, throughout the interview session opportunities were created for the interviewee to comment on the summary statements made by the interviewer and confirm with the interviewee that the correct interpretation had been made.

Documentary Evidence

Introduction

An extensive range of documentary evidence, both generated within the school and from sources outside the school, was used to build a picture of how the school developed during the period encompassed by this research. The analysis of the documentation allowed the evolving and changing priorities of the school to be mapped and how the leadership processes had developed and changed. Analysis of the documentation allowed common themes and emerging issues to be identified.

The school had an extensive range of archive material available in the form of bound and dated volumes of school documentation, press cuttings, letters, memos, policies, job descriptions, staff manuals, training material, and minutes of Governing Body, staff and subject meetings. In addition, the archive material included copies of documentation from sources external to the school including inspection and educational advisors reports and school performance information from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), MidYIS value added measures and Fischer Family Trust (FFT).

Documentation generated in the school

In this section I outline the range of documentation generated in the school used in the research and provide a justification for its inclusion in the evidence base.

Subject Reviews

The archive material included bound volumes of the subject reviews carried out in between 1999 and 2004. The subject reviews, in each of the years mentioned, reported on the performance of all curriculum subjects at Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 and represented, apart from 1999, the views and contributions from Subject Leaders (SL), deputy heads

(DH), current headteacher (CH) and members of the Leadership Group (LG). The 1999 Subject Review was written entirely by the current headteacher (CH).

The subject reviews of 2000 – 2004, provided an insight into the various perspectives presented by the contributors, and together with the 1999 subject review allowed the development of curriculum areas and the changing priorities of the school to be mapped over time. The curriculum areas reported on in the subject reviews were art, business studies/economics, design and technology, drama, English, media studies, geography, health and social care, history, ICT, law, mathematics, MFL, music, physical education, religious education, science and Welsh. Special Education Needs (SEN) was reported on in 2003 and 2004. Design technology included food technology, graphics and child development; MFL included French and Spanish; health and social care included sociology and leisure and tourism; English included literature and language; science included physics, chemistry and biology; a total of 29 curriculum areas were covered by the subject review. The fact that 29 subject areas were reported on meant that a significant number of the staff had contributed to its construction through the self-evaluation section of the subject review. Examination of the self-evaluation section of the subject review enabled a broad and rich understanding of the perspectives of the teaching staff to be elicited.

Each of the subject reviews 1999 – 2004 contained reports on standards achieved written by CH, teaching and learning written by LG, self-evaluation written by SL and action planning written by DH. In addition, each year's review reported on other specific focus areas that changed from year to year, being dependent on the school's priorities for the particular year in question. For example, the focus areas for the 2004 review were interpersonal relationships written by LG, action research written by SL

and pupils' opinions in the subject written by DH; whereas in 2003 they were assessment written by SL, differentiation written by SL, subject documentation written by DH and leadership and management written by LG. Prior to 1998, subject reviews were not undertaken by the subject leaders or the previous headteacher.

School Newsletter

As with subject reviews, the school archives contained bound volumes of the school newsletter, which was introduced in April 1998 by CH and published every two weeks. The newsletters published between 1998 and 2004 were used as part of the documentary analysis, consisting of approximately 140 issues. Parents, governors and staff (teaching and non-teaching) receive a copy of the newsletter, which generally has four pages. On the first page the headteacher produces an editorial, entitled Letter from the Headmaster, of approximately 450 words and the back page gives a summary of the calendar events for the coming months. The inside pages are written by staff (teaching and non-teaching), pupils and sometimes parents on a range of issues including, school visits, sporting achievements, fund raising activities and pastoral news. Analysis of the headteacher's editorials in the 1998 – 2004 issues enabled recurring themes to be identified and, additionally provided evidence of the consistency of the values that underpinned the culture and ethos of the school. The editorials also allowed analysis of the expectations the school had of its pupils, staff and parents through the explicit or implicit commentaries made by the headteacher. Expectations included those related to achievements, attendance and behaviour.

School Assemblies

Bound volumes of the school assemblies between 1998 and 2004 were examined. A 101 of the assemblies were also available in *Off the Shelf Assemblies* (Beales, 2002), a

collection of some of the assemblies given by CH in the period 1998 – 2001. CH was responsible for two whole school assemblies a week and these were the ones bound in separate volumes for each of the years given.

The purpose of including the assemblies was to explore the moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions of the leadership practices in the school. In particular, how the assemblies were used to convey to pupils (and staff) the values and beliefs of the current headteacher (CH). Cross-referencing with school policies and other documentation enabled judgements to be made about the extent to which the articulated values and beliefs in assemblies were reflected within the working practices of the school. Additionally, assemblies and their perceived impact on the culture and ethos of the school were explored through the semi-structured interviews.

School Development Plans

There were three school development plans (SDPs) available for interrogation. Two covered the period 1998 – 2001, one having been constructed by the previous headteacher (PH) and the other by the current headteacher (CH). The latter SDP superseded the former SDP when the CH was appointed in 1998. The third SDP covered the period 2002 – 2005 and was constructed by the CH following consultations with pupils, teachers, non-teachers, governors and parents. The questionnaires used in the consultation period for the construction of the SDP 2002 – 2005 were also examined to determine the extent to which issues identified were incorporated within the SDP.

The SDPs represented the working manuals for the strategic development of the school and consequently were important documents in determining the direction, ethos and

priorities of the school, indirectly giving an insight into the leadership and management practices of the school before and after 1998.

Minutes of various meetings

Of particular interest were the minutes of Department meetings and Governing Body meetings. Department meeting minutes were used to track the extent to which strategies identified in the SDP were implemented and acted on and how the strategies impacted on the leadership and management of the various subject areas. The Governing Body minutes provided evidence of some of the political issues surrounding being a Foundation School and also the micro-political power struggles between the various factions within the Governing Body.

Other

A range of other documentation was available including memos, letters, staff meeting notes, staff training notes and staff manuals for 1997 and 1998. The previous head (PH) teacher was the author of the 1997 staff manual and the current headteacher (CH) the author of the 1998 staff manual. The staff manuals proved to be of particular importance since they provided evidence of the different leadership styles of PH and CH. There were considerable differences in the content and style of the two staff manuals, indicative of the priorities of PH and CH; they also presented an insight into the educational philosophy and values of the two headteachers.

The school prospectuses for 1997 and post 1998 were also available and comparisons of the different styles, priorities and expectations of PH and CH could be made through them since they were the authors of the two prospectuses. Although there were job descriptions available post-1998 there were none covering the pre-1998 period. The

purpose of examining the post-1998 job descriptions was to determine the extent to which they reflected the expectations and vision of the school articulated through the school prospectus, SDPs, staff manual and other documentation.

Two additional publications were examined. Bill's Briefs and the Governor's Bulletin. These were both written by CH and produced in the period 1998 – 2000. Bill's Briefs was an internal newsletter for the teaching staff at the school, containing educational commentaries, school updates and commentaries. The Governor's Bulletin was for circulation to the governors and contained educational commentaries and updates about events taking place in the school. Both publications were aimed at raising the awareness of staff and governors to educational matters.

Sources of documentation generated from outside the school

In this section I outline the sources of documentation generated from outside the school used in the research and provide a justification for its inclusion in the evidence base. The importance of including externally generated documentary evidence was firstly to triangulate the conclusions drawn from examining the documentation generated from within the school and secondly, to lend weight to the trustworthiness of the descriptive account.

Headteacher performance review

The headteacher performance review is carried out by Consortia Wales on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government. Through Consortia Wales an external advisor is attached to the school to advise the Governing Body on the performance of the headteacher. The external adviser reviews the evidence and prepares the review statement and negotiates with the headteacher agreed objectives for the following year. The performance reviews

for 2002, 2003 and 2004 were available for analysis and examination. Three governors were members of the performance review panel, including the chair and vice chair, and these were interviewed as part of the data collection in the empirical stage of the research.

The purpose of including the headteacher performance review statements was to provide a rich source of data, produced by an external observer, on the leadership and management of the headteacher. The review reports on leadership and management as well as on pupil progress, although the former was used rather than the latter for the purpose of this research since the aim was to analyse the leadership practices during the period encompassed by the research.

Inspection Reports

Three inspection reports, commissioned by Estyn, were available for examination and analysis. The first was carried out between 17th and 20th December 1994 and the second between 7th and 11th February 2000 and the third between 13th and 16th February 2006. At the time of the first inspection the previous headteacher was at the school and the second inspection took place with the current headteacher in place. The inspections reported on the same aspects of the school enabling comparisons between 1994, 2000 and 2006 to be made. The inspection report of 2006 allowed the current development stage of the school to be examined. The aspects reported on included standards achieved, ethos of the school, quality of education, leadership and management, subjects and areas of learning. Ethos of the school contained judgements about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the school. Included in the leadership and management section were judgements on the quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement and leadership and efficiency.

The inspection reports were valuable documents in that they provided objective and criteria based judgments about the school from an external perspective. They were a useful reference point for mapping out the development of the school over time and for providing qualitative evidence for the culture and ethos of the school pre and post 1998. They also provided evidence on the leadership of the school, the headteacher leadership in particular, and therefore proved a useful reference for analysing how leadership had changed over time and to draw comparisons between PH and CH leadership practices.

Annual Performance Review

The annual performance review is produced by ESIS (Education and School Improvement Service), which is the unitary authority advisory service. They are generated externally to the school and analyse the performance of the school relative to local and national trends and statistics. Additionally, using prior attainment measures, they are able to provide schools with an analysis of the 'value added' to the pupils prior attainment levels by the school over time, both for individual subjects and for the school as a whole. Value added is discussed in Chapter 2.

The APR (Annual Performance Review) was included in the documentary evidence base since it provided clear evidence of the improved results between 1998 and 2004.

Welsh Assembly Government Performance Indicator Statistics

In addition to the APR, each year the Welsh Assembly Government produce a statistical analysis of the results of the GCSE examinations in the preceding summer examinations; the analysis is generally produced in early November each year. Included in the statistical analysis is data on the percentage of pupils achieving 5A* - C grades, the percentage achieving 5A* - G grades, the percentage of pupils achieving at least

one grade C or G grade, the average point score, an analysis of the performance in the core subjects of English, maths and science, and the percentage of pupils achieving the core indicator. The performance of boys and girls are compared, as is the performance of the school against the unitary authority and national averages. The Welsh Assembly Government produces the statistical analysis on Form RE2; the RE2 forms relating to the case study school for 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 were available for inspection.

MidYIS value added measures

Since 1999, the school has participated in the mid-years testing (MidYIS) project coordinated by the Curriculum, Evaluation and Management Centre (CEM) at Durham University (see Chapter 2), which involves Year 7 pupils on entry to the school undertaking a range of MidYIS standardised tests. The purpose of the testing is to provide predictive data concerning the likely performance of pupils at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Within the context of this research it was used to substantiate claims of the value added by the school between year 7 and the end of year 9 and 11. Once pupils have sat the Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 4 examinations, MidYIS carries out an analysis that aims to compare predictive data with actual outcomes at the end of year 9 and 11. A statistical analysis is produced for the school at both pupil and subject level giving the value added measures. These have been used in the context of this research to substantiate the findings encompassed by this research.

Newspaper reports

The school archives include extracts of newspaper cuttings concerning the school covering the period 1991 to the present day. The newspaper reports are those that have appeared in the Argus a local paper, the Western Mail, which is a Welsh national paper

and the Wales on Sunday, which is also a national paper. The reason for their inclusion was that they provided evidence of the political backdrop to the school, particularly when it opted out of authority control to become Grant Maintained and later a Foundation School. Additionally, the cuttings provide evidence for some of the micro-politics within the school, particularly at Governing Body level and where teacher unions have intervened and made public their objections to policies and procedures adopted by the leadership of the school.

Other

The main source of other external documentation is the letters from the Welsh Office (now the Welsh Assembly Government), school auditors, solicitors, the unitary authority and parents. Their inclusion in the evidence base was to provide a richer picture of the school and how it managed the boundaries.

Analysis of the documentary evidence

The previous sections have described the extensive range of documentation used in this research. The analysis involved an initial reading of the documentation available in order to gain a broad insight and overview of the case study school. During the first reading, general notes were made concerning any interesting features of the school and for identifying important themes and common issues. The initial reading allowed the documentation to be further sub-divided according to the emerging themes and issues identified. A second reading of the documentation then took place, with extensive notes made under each of the sub-divisions identified.

The main sub-divisions included strategic planning, professional development, standards of attainment/achievement, curriculum planning and management, monitoring and evaluation, assessment for learning, communications to parents, the

Governing Body, leadership practices and moral, spiritual and ethical issues. The second reading allowed analytical generalisations (Yin, 1994) to be formulated about the way in which the school had developed during the period encompassed by this research to be made. The analytical generalisations were used as a basis for the semi-structured interviews in order that they could be tested against the perceptions and views of the research participants.

Conclusion

The review of the documentary evidence used in this research demonstrates the wide and varied range of archive and contemporaneous material analysed as part of the research design. The depth and quality of the documentary evidence used in the course of the research has enabled a rich picture of the school to be constructed and triangulation within and between the various documentary sources to be made. The consistency of the central themes emerging from the various documents analysed lend substantive weight to internal validity and reliability, and trustworthiness of the conclusions drawn. The semi-structured interviews and questionnaire-based survey provided further extensive opportunities for triangulation of the data gleaned from the documentary evidence base.

Appendices B and C provide a comprehensive list of the documentary evidence used in this research. Much of the documentary evidence is not in the public domain as published articles, but was either generated within the school or confidential documentation produced by sources from outside the school and therefore could not be referenced in the normal way. Appendix B references sources generated in the school and Appendix C references sources generated from outside the school.

Critique of analysis of documentation

It is accepted that using content analysis as an instrument in the research has advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are, firstly it is an unobtrusive measure (Webb et al., 1996) where I could observe without being observed. Secondly, the data is in permanent form and therefore available for reanalysis, allowing reliability checks and replication studies to be undertaken. Thirdly, it enables a longitudinal study to be undertaken.

The disadvantages are firstly, the documents available may be limited or partial and the researcher may be selective in the choice of which documents to include. Secondly, the documents have been written for some purpose other than the research which may create bias and distortions in the analysis and lastly using documentation it is difficult to assess causal relationships – are the documents causes of the phenomena being researched. In the context of this research the content analysis of the documentation the main aim was to provide evidence to support the narrative account by the headteacher of the development of the leadership style during the period covered by the research.

Summary

Johnson (1994) defines a case study as an enquiry that uses multiple sources of evidence to investigate contemporary phenomenon in the context it occurs. The main methods used in case study research for collecting data are interviews, observation and documentary analysis (Bassey, 1999). Interviews are seen by Nisbet and Watt (1984) as the basic research instrument and argue that it is more difficult to ensure reliability using unstructured or semi-structured interviews because of the uniqueness of the respondent. Whilst Yin (1994) argues that in case study research the test of reliability is

whether another researcher following the procedures described by an earlier investigator would arrive at the same conclusions. Reliability according to Brock-Utne (1996) and Kleven (1995) is merely a precondition for attaining validity. Where the concept of validity is used to judge whether the research accurately describes the events it is intended to describe.

The aim of this research is to analyse the leadership process in a school during a period of significant change and development. To achieve this aim the research study involved the case study of a school that had undergone substantive and sustained improvements in performance over the past five years. Multiple sources of evidence (Johnson, 1994) have been used to investigate the transformation of the case study school over time. Documentary analysis, together with the outcomes of the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews (Bassey, 1999) enabled effective methodological triangulation (Bush, 2002) of the data to take place so that any findings and conclusions could be given with a high degree of confidence. Methodological triangulation was important in establishing both reliability (Yin, 1994) and validity (Brock-Utne, 1996) to the research. The data collection methods used enabled a rich descriptive, (a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973)), narrative account to be written that demonstrated how transforming leadership practices had evolved over time in the case study school.

Chapter 5 Narrative Account

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a narrative account of how the leadership processes changed and strategies were developed during the period 1998 – 2004 in the case study school. The narrative account represents a first person account by the insider researcher, the headteacher. This approach raises a number of issues. The first concerns the trustworthiness of the account that has been written, and the second, how the perceptions and interpretations of the actors in the social setting of the case study school have been represented within the narrative account.

The justification for writing a first person account is that it provides a rich and descriptive analysis from the headteacher's perspective, of the leadership actions, processes and strategies, that contributed to the sustained and substantive improvements in performance of the case study school. The insider researcher is in the unique position of not only being able to describe the unfolding leadership processes but also to provide reasons why particular actions were taken.

In order to strengthen the trustworthiness of the narrative account, voices additional to those of the insider researcher have also been represented. The additional participant voices were located through the semi-structured interviews, extracts from the extensive documentary analysis and the quantitative analysis of the questionnaire-based survey. In order to lend additional weight and strength to the trustworthiness of the account and the recollections of the insider researcher, a draft version of chapter 5 was shared with members of the leadership group who had been at the school for more than seven years to check the accuracy of it.

This chapter makes extensive use of quotations taken from the semi-structured interviews. Participants in the semi-structured interviews included 10 members of the teaching staff who had been in the school for greater than six years; five additional members of the teaching staff currently employed by the school having only experienced the leadership of the current headteacher; three members of the Governing Body, including two parent governors who had been members of the Governing Body covering the tenure of the previous and current headteacher; two members of the support staff, one of whom had experience of both the previous and current headteacher and seven pupils in years 11 - 13.

In order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity, participants are not referred to by name or in the case of a teacher, through the subjects that they teach. So that the extracts in the text can be located to particular groups of participants, codes were used to represent the participant's voices, these are shown in Figure 12.

Code used	Participant's voice
CG	Co-opted governor
CH	Current headteacher
HY	Head of Year
LG	Leadership group
PG	Parent governor
PH	Previous headteacher
PL	Pupil from Y11 - 13
SL	Subject leader
SS	Support staff
ST	Subject teacher

Figure 12 Coding used to represent participant's voices in the narrative account

The same coding is used to identify the authors of particular documentation referred to, and quoted from, in this account. The quotations used from the semi-structured interviews were checked by the participants for correctness of interpretation and wording before inclusion into the narrative account. Where possible, the recollections of participants through the semi-structured interviews, is supported and cross-referenced through extracts from relevant archive and contemporaneous documentation. The considerable degree of triangulation afforded through the range of perspectives provided adds considerable weight to the authenticity and trustworthiness of the narrative account.

The narrative account, which is used to describe the various phases of the school's development, follows a particular structure so that the reader can discern the insider researcher's perspectives whilst at the same time differentiating the voices and views of the various participants relevant to the phase of development being described. The structure consists of a first person account of the insider researcher in which the personal recollections are portrayed. The views and voices of the participants are interspersed within the personal reflection, and evidence gleaned for the document analysis and questionnaire-based survey is also presented.

Overview of the narrative account

The aim of this narrative account is to describe the way in which leadership practices and strategies were developed over a six-year period during which time substantive and sustained improvements in performance were made. The narrative account describes and analyses four particular strands of development identified through this research as

key components to the sustained and substantive improvements in performance in the period 1998 to 2004.

Strand 1 is primarily concerned with creating the vision, raising expectations and changing the culture and ethos of the school. Strand 2 describes how the competency and capacity for change were developed and Strand 3 explores the importance and significance of effective strategic planning. Strand 4 looks at distributed leadership and sustaining achievements.

Although for the purpose of this research I have teased out the separate strands for individual analysis, the strands ran co-jointly but with varying degrees of emphasis, linked by the aim of raising standards and improving performance, during the period this research was concerned with.

Consistent with the findings in the literature review, change in any organisation is often the cause of resistance within the organisation. I have therefore also included in this narrative account, three specific studies of the resistance to change experienced in the case study school. In particular I have described why they occurred, how the political dynamics enabled them to be addressed, and the implications for leadership practices in the micro-political and socially sensitive environment of schools to be explored.

Strand 1 – Creating the Vision – Changing Expectations

Introduction

Creating the vision for the school was an essential ingredient of the first meeting I had with the staff at the school in April 1998. I had deliberately arranged for it to be held off site, in pleasant surroundings; free from the distractions that can occur when INSET is carried out within school. Starting from a positive note I praised the school for its many achievements, indicating that it was well known in the area for its caring ethos and firm discipline. I then moved onto the first group exercise, which was designed to encourage staff to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Each group were asked to design an advert for the school that could be placed in a paper in order to attract customers to the school. From this exercise the school's strengths were identified. Keeping to the same groups, members were asked to identify which elements of the school may prevent parents from sending their children to the school. In the last exercise, members of staff were asked to articulate the vision they would like for the school based in an ideal world where resources, time and effort were unlimited. Encouragingly, the strengths and weaknesses identified by the staff were consistent with those I had identified through my own research of the school documentation and through interviews with staff prior to taking up appointment. I felt confident enough to introduce the motto the school would be adopting – "Today's success is yesterday's vision" – going on to describe in some detail the framework that would be put in place to ensure the vision became a reality.

In my letter of application for the headship post I had written:

"Translating vision into practice would require the development of a number of areas of the school, including teaching and learning, planning, monitoring and evaluation, leadership and relationships with the community. Of these I

would place the highest priority on the quality of teaching and learning together with its monitoring and evaluation". (CH, December 9th, 1997)

In the same letter I also identified the importance of high expectations, professional competence and creating opportunities for professional development. Further, I indicated that I saw my role as providing effective management and leadership to enable the school to fulfil its vision.

"The Governing Body has, over time, recognised the importance attached by CH to vision as the driving force behind the school's improvement". (CG, Semi-structured interview, December 12th 2005)

The letter of application made my intentions clear and, although holding legitimised positional authority in the school, the immediate task as leader was to encourage my views and vision for the school to be adopted and shared by all staff. I felt this was essential if the culture of the school was to be changed, expectations raised and a learning community developed. The school culture could not be seen in isolation to the community it served or the various stakeholders in the school, consequently the challenge was not just about changing teacher expectations but also about embracing the wider school community of parents, governors, feeder schools, external agencies and the local community. Managing the boundaries was an important part of the strategic plan in creating the image and raising expectations.

Creating the vision was concerned with challenging assumptions and questioning practice. The 'coalfield mentality' is a dominant feature of the area, permeating the school culture, its pupils and staff. This mentality is characterised by low expectations and a resigned acceptance that when pupils leave school they do so, in general, to take up low paid and low skilled jobs, often on assembly lines, with limited prospects for future career development and a parochial view that ties them to the valleys and Wales. This culture of low expectation causes difficulties for valley schools, especially when

they are situated in former coalfield areas once rich with industrial diversity and able to absorb the many youngsters who left school lacking substantive qualifications. A situation that no longer exists as world economies have impacted on the industrial landscape of South Wales but leaving a remnant of youngsters and parents with limited horizons and expectations about future prospects.

“However, the underlying problems of low educational attainment remain. Further action needs to be taken to ensure that coalfield areas do not miss out on key government initiatives and that genuine progress is made in raising standards both in school and in the wider adult population of former mining communities”. (Coalfield Communities Campaign, 2003)

In tackling the culture of low expectation, I felt it important to make a symbolic new beginning. The opportunity created by being a newly appointed head gave me a valuable ‘honeymoon’ period in which to indicate the school’s priorities to stakeholders in the school. It was important to remove any ambiguity or doubt about where I stood on standards, expectations and commitment.

“...recommended that, lest principals let the window of opportunity pass, principals forge ahead with needed changes....by developing a long-range strategy and moving towards it immediately, new leaders can manoeuvre to reshape the structural patterns of the school social system over time”. (Hart, p459)

To distance the school from the past, and signal a new beginning, within the first term the name of the school had been changed and a motto adopted. The previous name had been synonymous with the grant maintained political dimension and the baggage that went with that. The school badge consisting of a raised arm holding a sword had suggested an aggressiveness inconsistent with the culture of the school I wished to develop and the inclusion of ‘comprehensive’ in the name had suggested mediocrity and a commonality of low expectations evidenced in valley schools that I wished to challenge and change. The new name, which included the term ‘High School’ together

with a new badge and the motto 'Today's success is yesterday's vision', signalled a new beginning for the school, establishing the central theme of high expectations and achievement.

The questionnaire-based survey results suggest that the leadership strategies concerned with raising expectations and articulating a clear vision were successful, as indicated by the analysis of the perceptions of the teaching staff shown in Figure 13.

	Rating	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Question								
Communicates a compelling vision		43.5%	17.4%	34.8%	4.3%	0	0	0
Cumulative percentage		43.5%	60.9%	95.7%	100%			
Establishes clear targets and goals		65.2%	21.7%	13.0%	0	0	0	0
Cumulative percentage		65.2%	87.0%	100%				
Demonstrates high expectations		47.8%	30.4%	17.4%	0	4.3%	0	0
Cumulative percentage		47.8%	78.3%	95.7%	95.7%	100%		
Tracks others' performance against specific objectives		52.2%	34.8%	13.0%	0	0	0	0
Cumulative percentage		52.2%	87.0%	100%				

Figure 13 Participants' perceptions about expectations and vision based on questionnaire-based survey

(Rating A = very strongly agree, G = Very strongly disagree. Total responses to questions shown N = 92)

During this period considerable efforts were taken to align staff to a new vision for the school. However, therein lay the potential for conflict and ambiguity since there was some divergence between my vision and that held by a significant number of the staff. I was driven by a personal conviction that pupils could achieve provided they were encouraged to do so through high expectations and motivational teaching; a view not necessarily shared by all staff.

"If the values of management diverge significantly from those of the workers, leadership success by definition is impossible to achieve. So leadership is about alignment, understanding, and change". (Sarros and Santora, 2001, p384)

The vision of the school pre-1998 had been centred round emulating the public sector of education particularly those aspects related to discipline and uniform and an orderly environment. In discussing the vision of the school pre and post-1998 a member of the support staff (SS) stated:

The vision before (1998) was based on becoming a selective school, not serving local community needs. Today (post 1998) the vision is concerned with developing a school towards a common aim of pupils achieving their potential. (SS, semi-structured interview, December 2005)

The vision was unsustainable against the cultural backdrop of a valley's community and whilst in the short-term it placed the school on an even-keel in the long term it was failing in its prime function of teaching and learning as evidenced through the inspection report of 1994.

There is however, a sizeable minority of classes in which the quality of learning is unsatisfactory...Keen discipline in the school, coupled with a caring environment promote an atmosphere in which pupils are ready to work...they behave well...Some of the more able pupils find the pace too slow and the work not challenging enough, whilst those less able struggle to understand the work and keep up with the pace set by the teacher. (School Inspection Report 1994, p6)

The school were aware of the underperformance of its pupils, as minutes of the curriculum committee at the time reveal.

A repeat of these results in the summer and the failure to improve upon last summer's results of 29% will result in the school being flagged as a failing school...this would doubtless give great satisfaction to those LEA/County employees who are still campaigning to have us closed down. (SL, Minutes of Curriculum Committee meeting, January 22nd, 1997, p3)

although it was apparent that some present did not understand the cause of pupil underachievement when they say

...the school results are based on the core subjects for the whole year group and that we don't have the depth in this school unlike the big comprehensives. (SL, Minutes of Curriculum Committee meeting, January 22nd, 1997, p3)

and did not seem to have a clear strategy whereby performance would be improved

...to improve results we could introduce new subjects such as Italian and Spanish (SL, Minutes of Curriculum Committee meeting, January 22nd, 1997, p3)

Reference to the staff manual 1997 and school development plan 1998 – 2000 constructed by the previous head (PH) demonstrates the pre-occupation with discipline and class control rather than teaching and learning. The aims of the school is defined in terms of:

"A reputation for a structured well-disciplined environment; small overall size and class size; adherence to strict uniform and discipline codes to create the correct pupil demeanour and to foster a favourable public image". (PH, School Development Plan 1998 – 2001, p3)

The aims being reinforced through the Action Learning Group, a sub-committee of the Governing Body, consisting of members of the Governing Body, the head and members of the Senior Management Team, where it is stated at one particular meeting:

"The feeling of the meeting was that the marketing techniques that had been used were proper and in keeping with the aims of the school which were to provide a traditional and disciplined learning environment". (PG, Action Learning Group minutes, March 4th, 1997)

The emphasis on a well-disciplined school is seen in the introduction to the staff manual for 1997 where the previous headteacher (PH) writes:

"The school aspires to remain small, select and civilised...and to produce dignified, disciplined individuals through a commitment to their personal, moral and social well-being". (PH, Staff Manual 1997, p1)

By focusing on discipline and classroom control the school was failing to address underachievement in academic performance.

Whilst the school had a good reputation for dealing with difficult pupils and an effective pastoral system it had not made the link between effective teaching and learning and improved behaviour or performance. A point made in the introduction to the teaching and learning policy constructed by the current headteacher (CH) in 1998:

"The raison d'être for schools is that pupils learn and teachers teach, but this self-evident fact is often given low priority by staff as they cope with the numerous demands made on them in the course of their work. Thus, although the content and structure of lessons is often well planned the underlying theories and principles of teaching and learning are not being systematically applied to allow the most effective teaching and learning to take place.

This means that teaching strategies are not always appropriate for the pupils being taught, differentiation within teaching sets is underdeveloped and some pupils behave with animosity; showing a reluctance to learn. This could be interpreted solely as result of behavioural difficulties when in fact it is just as likely to be due to inappropriate teaching styles and a failure to encourage pupils to want to learn.

The purpose of this Teaching and Learning Policy is to emphasize those factors that promote effective teaching and learning and an explicit expectation that all teaching staff will apply these principles to their own practice". (CH, Introduction to the Teaching and Learning Policy, June 1998)

In the long-term, low expectations within the context of an orderly environment, may have lead to a downward spiral of underperformance. In this scenario the school would

be perceived as a 'sink' school for underachievers and pupils with behavioural difficulties because the school could demonstrate its capacity for controlling and dealing with challenging pupils.

The impact of the new vision articulated by the CH, which emphasised high expectations and effective teaching and learning strategies, can be demonstrated by analysing the Key Stage 3 outcomes during the period 1993 – 2002 shown in Figure 14.

	0 to 11	12 to 14	15+
KS3 Points	Lower band	Middle band	Upper band
1993	31.8	61.2	7.0
1994	16.7	52.1	31.5
1995	15.4	50.9	33.7
1996	27.0	42.0	31.0
1997	15.4	50.9	33.7
1998	27.0	42.0	31.0
1999	18.7	46.7	34.6
2000	16.9	33.1	50.0
2001	17.5	23.0	59.5
2002	9.4	23.9	66.7

Figure 14 Percentage of the cohort in lower, middle and upper ability bands at Key Stage 3 between 1993 and 2002

The figures in the columns refer to the percentages of the cohort attaining low, middle and upper scores in the core subjects at the end of Key Stage 3. For example a pupil achieving three level 7s would attain a score of 21, whilst three 4s would achieve a total of 12. The low scores corresponded to ≤ 11 , middle scores $12 \leq X \leq 14$ and the

higher scores ≥ 15 . Although information pre-1993 is not available, the overall trend is discernable from the data.

Since 1993, the percentage of the Year 9 cohort achieving the higher levels has increased from 7.0% to 66.7% whereas the middle percentages have decreased from 61.2% to 23.9% and the lower band from 31.8 to 9.4% with the 2003 analysis showing a similar pattern. The percentage changes in the distribution between middle and higher levels of achievement at the end of Key Stage 3 have been significant in the period 1998 to 2003. However, as has been demonstrated in Chapter 2, the improvement in Key Stage 3 outcomes cannot be attributed to any significant changes in the ability intake of the pupils during this period. This suggests that the improvements in performance are a result of improvements in the teaching and learning strategies. This improvement would be consistent with the higher expectations and emphasis placed on teaching and learning during the period of sustained growth of the school since 1998; reflecting the change in the visionary aspirations of the school at this time.

"The Governors are very proud of the year on year improvement in levels of attainment of our pupils. Their performance in the context of local, national and school targets is worthy of particular commendation at both Key Stages 3 and 4". (GB, Performance Management Review of Headteacher, 13th January 2005, p2)

Strategies used for changing the vision and raising expectations

In this section I outline four key strategies used to raise expectations and through which the vision of the school was articulated to parents, pupils and staff.

School newsletter

The schools documentation and public occasions were used explicitly to indicate to parents, governors and staff what the vision of the school was and their responsibility in helping it become a reality. The first newsletter issued on April 27th 1998 made it explicit to parents the school's expectation of them when I wrote in the Headmaster's editorial:

"The purpose of writing to you is to outline my thoughts about the direction in which the school should try to move over the next few years and give you information about the changes that I intend implementing from September (1998) to assist this process". (CH, Newsletter, Vol 1 Issue 1, April 27th, 1998, p1)

There are many enviable features of the school...however, it is important not to become too complacent...the major priority will be to concentrate on the level of achievement...ensuring high expectations are the norm. (CH, Newsletter, Vol 1 Issue 1, April 27th, 1998, p1)

"There are a number of ways in which we can help pupils to achieve their goals. These involve helping pupils organise their work more effectively, setting clearly defined targets for improvement and ensuring high expectations are the norm. As parents, you will have a central role in this – without your tangible support the school is unlikely to completely fulfil the targets it has set itself". (CH, Newsletter, Vol 1 Issue 1, April 27th, 1998, p1)

The same edition continued by indicating the way the school intended raising standards and how parents could help in the process.

There are a number of changes which the school will be introducing from September in order to help raise standards of achievement of all pupils. (CH, Newsletter, Vol 1 Issue 1, April 27th, 1998, p2)

The initiatives introduced to parents included target setting for pupils, the pupils' Personal Organiser for recording home works, targets and notes from parents, increased Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) time, changes in management responsibilities and the introduction of Year 10 examinations. Parents were also advised that withdrawing Year 11 pupils from GCSE examination classes following mock examinations was to be stopped, signalling higher expectations of pupils. Further, parents were told that the newsletter would be published every two weeks instead of once a term, a weekly Headmaster's surgery on Saturday mornings would be established, and coursework guidance provided for Year 11.

"The Saturday morning surgery is a revolutionary concept and shows that the head is committed". (SS, Semi-structured interview, 4th January 2006)

The first newsletter served a number of purposes. Firstly, it indirectly indicated to teaching staff what the expectations were of them; secondly it opened up communications with parents and began the process of establishing an effective parent-school partnership. The newsletter also served to inform the Governing Body which priorities needed addressing in order to raise standards in the school. It was part of the capacity development strategy designed to increase the professional understanding and competencies of staff and governing body whilst at the same time engaging parents in educational discourse so that over time their expectations of the school would be raised. Parents would then be in a position to bring pressure to bear where perceived shortfalls in standards and expectations occurred.

"The newsletters communicate the wider educational sphere of the pupils. They convey the wider learning experiences and celebrate success; success breeds success". (SL, Semi-structured interview, 16th January 2006)

Analysis of the newsletters between April 1998 and July 1999 reveal recurring themes of high expectations, improved performance and attendance and parental participation

and responsibilities, whilst at the same time indicating the support mechanisms being put in place to enable targets for improvement to be met. Under the previous headteacher, newsletters were produced once a term, whilst under the new leadership of the school they were produced once every two weeks.

Through the newsletter parents were invited to contribute to the construction of the school development plan 1998 – 2001, the purpose being to establish a dialogue with the parents and to establish an effective parent-school partnership.

"I am currently carrying out an audit on all aspects of the school. This will help me identify those things which we are doing well and those which need further development...I would like to hear the views and opinions of the parents and for that reason I have enclosed with this newsletter a questionnaire to complete...have been analysed we should have a comprehensive picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This will allow myself and staff to construct the school development plan". (CH, Newsletter, Vol. 1 Issue 2, 7th May 1998, p2)

The issue of parent partnership is returned to in issue 10 of the newsletter where the formation of a Parent's Council is first mooted

"One of the major concerns in recent educational legislation has been how parents can be encouraged to play a more active role in the day-to-day life of schools and in the development of effective home-school links. As a result I think it appropriate at this time to try and form a Parents Council run along similar lines to the pupils Schools Council. Whilst the Schools Council is principally a forum for pupils to express their views and opinions, the Parents Council will be specifically for parents". (CH, Newsletter, Vol 1 Issue 10, 11th October 1998, p1)

and in discussing initiatives put in place to help raise standards

"These initiatives have been introduced to maximise parental involvement, encourage pupils to set targets and to raise educational standards". (CH, Newsletter, Vol. 1 Issue 12, 6th November 1998, p4)

The importance of the initiatives being put in place and the more proactive involvement of parents in the school received widespread support as the following extract from a letter sent by a parent to the school during this period suggests.

"You should know that prior to your appointment my wife and myself were on the point of withdrawing our sons from the school because we felt it was failing them in several key areas. I don't know how representative our feelings were, but we know that some other parents are watching the school's progress as keenly as we are. We feel that the measures you are taking are essential for the future success of the school and so we are content for our sons to remain". (Letter from a parent, June 24th 1998, p2)

In the same letter, the parent expresses concern about some of the teaching staff holding low expectations of the pupils, an issue I have alluded to earlier in this chapter.

"I have heard teachers at [] express the 'philosophy' that the Valley's produce low achievers; such an attitude is both self-defeating and self-fulfilling...If teachers have low expectations of pupils they will be guided by this in the way they teach". (Letter from a parent, June 24th 1998, p1)

I have never underestimated the significance of the newsletter for keeping parents informed of developments in the school or using it as a vehicle for expressing the school's expectations of pupils, parents and staff. A point reiterated by a subject leader (SL) in the semi-structured interviews.

"The newsletter informs parents and celebrates success both at the individual and school level. It is important to write to parents – important that parents are aware of you and what the school is trying to achieve and for keeping staff on their toes". (SL, Semi-structured interview, January 16th 2006)

Whilst I have focused mainly on the newsletters produced between April 1998 and July 1999 a period of significant change in the school coinciding with a change in

headteacher, the same recurring themes are evidenced in all newsletters issued between 1998 and 2005.

School prize giving

The newsletter has proved to be an effective vehicle for pushing through change and raising expectations. It has been used to celebrate pupil successes, give helpful guidelines to parents on how best to support their child and constantly used to reinforce the school's vision, so that over time it has become part of the accepted culture of the school. A significant event each November is the publication of the transcript of the Headmaster's speech given at Prize Giving. There has always been a clear purpose for the speech over and above the obvious accolades given to pupils receiving awards and examination certificates. One of its main purposes has been to reinforce the vision of the school, reinforce high expectations and publicly give praise to staff, pupils or governing body that exemplify the school's expectations.

It has also served a secondary function of advising parents of what is not acceptable either from them or their offspring. For example in the 1998 speech I wrote: *'However, without the contribution, support and commitment from parents much of what we set out to achieve would not take place.'* (Newsletter November 6th 1998, p3). In referring to the initiatives mentioned earlier:

"These initiatives have been introduced to maximise parental involvement, encourage pupils to set targets and to raise educational standards". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 6th, 1998, p4)

The recurring themes of high expectations, parental support and raising standards of achievement appear in all Prize Giving speeches – through constant reinforcement and

educational osmosis I believe the vision for the school has been absorbed into the school's culture.

"The main priority established in September 1998 was that of raising standards of achievement. An integral part of this has been improvements in monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the school and the encouragement of independent learning skills in pupils. We firmly believe that pupils who can think for themselves and organise their time effectively are more likely to achieve success and make best use of their skills and abilities". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 12th, 1999, p1)

"However the simple truth of the matter is that the educational prejudice and dogma of the past, that obscured reality, has merely served to ensure the schools continued growth and determination to succeed". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 12th, 1999, p4)

"We are of the opinion that if you don't know where you are going you will probably end up somewhere else. For this reason considerable attention is given to all our pupils to help them map out the future, monitoring progress and for ensuring they receive quality advice and support. Parents too, have an important part to play, since parental attitudes and the support offered at home influences the way in which pupils respond to the diet and expectations of the school." (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 10th, 2000, p1)

"Parents too have an important part to play, since parental attitudes and the support offered at home influences the way in which pupils respond to the diet and expectations of the school". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 10th 2000, p2)

"The second area where parents can play a significant part in supporting the working ethos and culture of the school is in their attitude towards attendance". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 10th 2000, p3)

"The effective partnership, which exists between [] and its parents and pupils, will ensure the translation of this vision for your children, our pupils, into practice". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 10th 2000, p6)

"Having a vision is knowing where you are going and planning how to get there, after all if you don't know where you are going you may end up going nowhere or where you don't want to be". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p2)

"Having a vision is about challenging the status quo. It is about raising expectations, it is about freeing oneself from the chains of mediocrity, it is about setting challenging targets, and it is about recognising and unlocking

potential and nurturing talents". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p2)

"It symbolises for us, the high expectations we have for all those involved in the school; including pupils, teaching staff, parents, governors and support staff. It recognises our faith in the potential of all who pass through our school". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p2)

"These are challenging targets, although nevertheless achievable. When I shared my Vision 2003 with staff in 1998, it is probably fair to say that they were a little sceptical. After all, the school was languishing towards the bottom of the unitary authority league, the sixth form only had 17 pupils, the school population was about 450 pupils and the 1994 inspection had revealed a number of serious weaknesses. Despite this backdrop, the school achieved its Vision 2003 by the year 2000, three years early, when Vision 2005 was formulated. Today we are well on the road to achieving Vision 2005". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p5)

"Making the vision a reality is about changing the culture and raising expectations. It is about having in place supportive mechanisms to enable change to occur. It is about strategic planning. It is about challenging the assumption that things can't improve. It is about removing the mental and physical barriers to progress and achievement. It is about having the confidence to act and to seize opportunities; it is about taking risks". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p5)

"Like the school, all parents have a vision for the future of their children. The challenge we face is in ensuring that our visions are consistent and convergent". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p5)

"The problem lies not with the school, but with the parents. Whilst the school is offering opportunities, sometimes parents are denying them, because their vision for the future of their children is not as optimistic as ours, being constrained by tradition, social norms and the lack of relevant and appropriate information. The school has a clear vision and is optimistic about the future; the school is philanthropic and caring in its approach; the school wants to nurture the child, so that they are able to fulfil the vision we have for them". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p5)

"If the school is to fulfil its vision for your children, we need you to be part of that vision and to share with us the values that underpin it. Having a vision, per se, does not mean it will happen, because translating the vision into practice requires support from all those involved in the process - the parent, the child, the governing body and the staff". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p6)

"Sometimes, pupils don't want to be part of the vision. The reasons for this can be complex, ranging from a lack of belief in their own potential, low self-esteem, teenage rebelliousness or the inability to make connections between desires and commitment. It is at these times that the school and

parents need to be particularly vigilant and supportive. A convergent and consistent message from both the school and parents can be instrumental in guiding youngsters through difficult times. The partnership between home and school is a vital ingredient in ensuring the vision becomes a reality". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p6)

"This evening I invite you to embrace the schools' vision and to join with us in celebrating the successes that were yesterday's vision". (CH, Prize giving speech, Friday November 9th, 2001, p6)

"The quality of school education concerns everyone. What is achieved by those who provide it, and by the pupils for whom it is provided, has lasting effects on the prosperity and well being of each individual and of the nation as a whole. ... High School takes this challenge very seriously and through a strong sense of purpose, carried through with enthusiasm and commitment by all staff, aims to bring out what the pupils have to give by setting challenging targets based on high expectations, and by motivating them towards active, well-directed enquiry and learning". (CH, Prize giving speech, Thursday November 14th, 2002, p1)

"In March, ACCAC, the Curriculum and Assessment Council of Wales, awarded us the Most Improved School Award in S E Wales and at the time I published the following press release:

This is the second time in three years that ... High School has achieved the award and naturally we are delighted by it. To achieve the award once was significant, but to achieve it twice in such a short space of time is an outstanding achievement and testimony to the dedication and commitment of the teaching staff of the school. They have successfully challenged low expectations and underachievement, to produce a dynamic culture of high expectations and achievement in the school. This has been underpinned by motivational teaching and learning, effective strategic planning and a caring supportive community". (CH, Prize giving speech, Thursday November 14th, 2002, p1)

"The school takes seriously the responsibility for improving itself so that pupils are appropriately challenged to reach ever-higher levels of achievement and is committed to establishing ... as a centre of learning for both staff and pupils alike". (CH, Prize giving speech, Thursday November 14th, 2002, p2)

"Although we have a literacy policy in place, and much work is done with individuals through the school, we need parental support in tackling this major area of concern. So often in our busy work schedules we leave pupils to get on with their work, yet boys generally lack the drive and determination to tackle successfully the work that is given them without adult intervention and help". (CH, Prize giving speech, Thursday November 14th 2002, p2)

“But if boys are to achieve, and the performance of the school is to continue to improve, the ‘laddish culture’ and the prevalence of weak literacy skills amongst boys has to be challenged and corrected. Years ago, many boys leaving school in the valleys, could walk into an apprenticeship, start work down the mines or take on a range of labouring jobs. The society they enter on leaving school today is radically different to that of twenty or thirty years ago. Much of the heavy industry that the area was famous for has gone, replaced with light industry and firms using the latest advances in technology. Future job prospects are extremely limited for those unable to offer good communication skills, including proficiency in information technology. The employee of tomorrow has to be versatile, willing to continue with their learning, have good time management skills and be self-disciplined”. (CH, Prize giving speech, Thursday November 14th 2002, p4)

“The quality of education concerns everyone because of its potential to change lives and create opportunities. Through effective teaching and learning, pupils are encouraged to exercise their minds, take control of their destiny and explore possibilities”. (CH, Prize giving speech, Thursday November 14th 2002, p6)

“Academic success is an essential investment for the future”. (CH, Prize giving speech, November, 2003, p1)

Assemblies

Leadership of the school during this phase was not just concerned with raising academic standards. There was also a perceived need to develop the moral, ethical and spiritual awareness of pupils and staff in order that the important priorities in life could be identified and the working relationships between the school community members enhanced. The main vehicle for raising the moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions was through the daily act of corporate worship that previously had been criticised for its lack of spiritual dimension.

“The term “spiritual” is not used, and there is little evidence of attention to this aspect of the pupils’ development”. (School Inspection Report, 1994, p7)

Whereas the 2000 inspection reported that

"Since the last report there has been significant improvement in the provision for, and response to, spiritual development". (School Inspection Report, 2000, p9)

The 2006 inspection report concluded:

"Well planned, Christian based acts of worship provide valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their place in the world and to develop the spiritual and moral dimensions". (School Inspection Report, 2006, p17)

And thoughts from a pupil:

"Assemblies are important as it is time when the Head is in action and speaking from the heart. One thing is that he seems genuine in the assemblies. They are difficult but he means it and cares. Society has fostered a new carefree culture and he attacks the materialism. If I think about Media theory, he often seems to be slightly Marxist and that is daring. His assemblies are important as they establish moral boundaries. I think that kids need the guidance. Look at some of Year 8, they can be a bit mad. I can't judge but it is important that they keep on listening. Five or seven year is a long time and it gets into your head. I can see the link with Media again and apply the Hypodermic Needle Theory, we're injected with the message but in a good way." (PL, Year 13, Semi-structured interview, January 4th 2006)

Bringing the school together at the start of a day was seen as important in inculcating expectations of behaviour, relationships with each other and in raising awareness of the important questions of life. The content and structure of the assemblies was strongly influenced by my own value system and Christian faith, a faith that pervades much of what I do and the decisions I make; which has not gone unnoticed by pupils.

"I came here knowing that it was a Christian school and I was cool with that. I'm not a Christian and some of my friends find it heavy but only those who act like your typical rebellious teenagers. We all notice that the assemblies are Christian but you get used to it; they contain nice stories, clever links and are challenging to follow." (PL, Year 11, Semi-structured interview, January 4th 2006)

"I still remember the first assembly in Year 7 and I thought wow it's like Church" (PL, Year13, Semi-structured interview, January 4th 2006)

Assemblies in the period 1998 to 2004 have covered diverse topics including political correctness, the importance of life, making choices and the existence of God. In presenting the material, opportunities have been used to illustrate how principles can be put into practice and to draw out the consequences of living lives that are orientated about self without regard for the needs of others.

The aims of the assemblies have been to provide all pupils with knowledge and insight into Christian beliefs and to create opportunities for religious experience in a way which develops their self-knowledge and spiritual awareness; to enable pupils to make moral decisions through application of reason by establishing a framework of values which regulate personal behaviour through principles rather than through fear of punishment or reward; to teach the principles which separate right from wrong; to encourage pupils to relate effectively to others, take responsibility, participate fully in the community and develop an understanding of citizenship; to know the rights and responsibilities of individuals within a social setting; to enable pupils to reflect on how the values and beliefs of people impinge on all aspects of their lives.

"He (CH) gives a message that you can take on board throughout the day. Yeah I do listen and think and I like it if it is related to some current affair or our own lives. I think it is good to relate assembly to reality. CH must take ages to write assemblies and it shows that he cares enough to take the time". (PL, Year 11, Semi-structured interview, 4th January 2006)

I have quoted from a range of assemblies given during the period 1998 – 2002 to demonstrate the range of moral, spiritual and ethical issues raised through them. The assemblies given in the period 1998 – 2000 were accepted for publication (Beales, 2002).

Raising the awareness of the plight of others

"We watch the nightly news and view without apparent concern the atrocities that occur daily throughout the so-called civilised world. In being armchair critics, we have become immune to the plight of real people in the real world. We are cocooned in our self-righteousness and our own security that blurs the distinction between fictional violence in films and actual violence portrayed on the news and in documentaries". (Beales, p19)

Standing firm in ones faith

"People sometimes find it difficult to admit they are a Christian or even show that they are interested in the Christian faith. They are afraid they will be teased or ridiculed and, as a result, embarrassed. Sometimes it's difficult to do what's right, especially if people react with mockery, false accusations and threats, belittling you in whichever way they can. It takes courage to stand up for what you believe in, but the temporary embarrassment will be a price worth paying for the Christian who is doing what is right". (Beales, p47)

The existence of God

"It is interesting to note how people accept the notion of an invisible force, acting through space, and producing tangible effects on the Earth, whilst at the same time are unable to accept the existence of an invisible God". (Beales, p64)

Convenience prayers

"We sometimes treat prayers like we treat convenience shopping. Only using it when we have a particular need to be satisfied or met". (Beales, p66)

Self-centred greed

"We justify our liposuction and cosmetic surgery on the backs of limbless landmine victims, we pout our obesity with indifference to malnutrition, we smoke our way to oblivion without a second glance at the children of T.B., we smugly sip our refreshingly cool cokes in ignorance of cracked lips and parched throats that cry out for fresh clean water, we clothe our bodies with designer labels, drip wealth from our fashion accessories and hide behind democracy to justify the continuance of the lifestyle we relish. We have prostituted ourselves to the ad-mans lies, and shackled ourselves to consumerism and throwaway principles". (Beales, p79)

Who we are

"People are seldom as they first appear. First impressions are nearly always limited and possibly wrong. Packaging can be very deceptive. Cereal boxes can make drab cereals look the most exciting food on earth. It doesn't follow that a well-dressed person is a better person than someone who cannot afford to dress as expensively". (Beales, p103)

Acting out our faith

"If seasoning has no flavour, it has no value. If Christians make no effort to affect the world around them, they are of little value to God Christians should affect others positively, just as seasoning brings out the best flavour in food". (Beales, p133)

"If a lamp doesn't help people see, it is useless. Does your life show other people how to find God and how to live for him? If not, ask what has extinguished your light". (Beales, p135)

Who controls our life?

"This raises the interesting question as to whether you behave like a thermometer or a thermostat. Have you got control of your life or do others control your life? Do you blend in with the crowd or do you change the crowd, do you influence or are you influenced?" (Beales, p167)

Slavery to desires

"At first, sin seems to offer freedom. But the liberty to do anything we want gradually becomes a desire to do everything. Then we become captive to sin, bound by its 'yoke'". (Beales, p187)

Thinking of others

"None of us like pain, or being witnesses to pain, although paradoxically we often inflict pain on others". (Beales, p189)

The rights of Christians

"Whilst, in general, it is unlikely that those following the Christian faith are openly persecuted, there is an undercurrent of liberalisation eating away at our freedom to uphold the tenets of the Christian faith. Through the thin veneer of political correctness, the fundamental precepts, beliefs and value system of the Christian faith are being doctored and eroded by spin doctors and politicians keener on gaining votes than standing firm on the principles of right and wrong". (Assembly 'Paradoxical Freedom', May 10th, 2002)

Assemblies, I believe, have played a significant part in moulding the culture of the school. They have conveyed a consistent message and established in the minds of pupils and staff expectations concerning self, relationships and integrity, bringing to the fore the deeper spiritual dimensions of life.

"I think that attitudes have changed. We are the generation that was raised by the fun loving hippie generation. We may have had too much freedom

and school provides the boundaries and nurtures us. Religion has also declined and this has affected boundaries and the moral standards. The school provides us with the Christian ethos and a consistent message". (PL, Year 13, Semi-structured interview, January 6th 2006)

To what extent these have impacted on the daily life of pupils is not easily quantified, although the citation I received in 2002 from the Year 11 leavers suggests they may have had some impact.

"The certificate is awarded for giving the most interesting and enthusiastic assemblies". (Citation on certificate presented by Year 11 leavers, June 2002)

Through regular assemblies the moral framework, value system and personal beliefs were, and continue to be, articulated to the pupils and indirectly to the staff in the case study school. The moral dimensions espoused are reflected in the policies developed, staff relationships with pupils and pupil relationships with other pupils and general pupil behaviour. Copies of the school assemblies have also been placed in the public domain by uploading them to the school website, thereby extending the boundaries of the school by reaching out to the wider community including parents and the families of pupils. Significantly this has led to an increase in enquiries from prospective parents who are seeking a school that emphasises the importance of Christian values in the conduct of ones life and from my perspective created a sense of calm and friendliness in and around the school that is often commented on by visitors and noted by the inspectors team in 2000:

"Assemblies are a vital part of school life and contain good quality acts of collective worship...The social education programme, the manner in which older pupils assume the roles of prefects, how they support younger pupils, extra-curricular activities, music and school performances, all help to foster pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Standards of behaviour are very good...the school is an orderly community". (School Inspection Report, February 2000, p2)

A sentiment reiterated by a member of staff during the semi-structured interviews.

"The Christian ethos is successfully expounded in the assemblies. The assemblies are knowledgeable, sensitive and imaginative. For many pupils, the assemblies are the only experience they have of Christian worship. The assemblies set the tone for the day and establish expectations. It is important to involve the school in the Christian teachings and deliver a consistent message. The assemblies have a clear structure and moral message. As a Christian, the assemblies mean a lot to me and I was delighted that CH introduced this ethos in assemblies". (LG, Semi-structured interview, January 16th 2006)

The questionnaire-based survey reveals that the perceptions of the teaching staff recognised that actions were generally consistent with the stated values and strong moral framework articulated by the positional leader of the school, shown in Figure 15.

	Rating	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Question								
Actions are underpinned by a strong moral framework		30.4%	39.1%	26.1%	4.3%			
Cumulative percentage		30.4%	69.6%	95.7%	100%			
Actions are consistent with own stated values		34.8%	26.1%	26.1%	4.3%	8.7%		
Cumulative percentage		34.8%	60.9%	87.0%	91.3%	100%		
Acts on his own personal beliefs		60.9%	13.0%	13.0%	8.7%	4.3%		
Cumulative percentage		60.9%	73.9%	86.9%	95.7%	100%		

Figure 15 Participants' perceptions about the leadership values and beliefs.

(Rating A = very strongly agree, G = Very strongly disagree. Total responses to questions shown N = 69)

Subject reviews

One of the key strategic tools identified through the semi-structured interviews as responsible for raising standards of attainment was the annual subject review.

"I have found the annual subject reviews helpful for monitoring and evaluation; making subject areas accountable through the formal process and which ensures all subjects have common aims and direction related to the whole school vision". (SL, Semi-structured interview, January 16th 2006)

The annual subject review was first introduced in September 1999, consisting of a written report on examination results, teacher targets, schemes of work, school development plan and teacher observations, concluding with a summary of the action points that had to be acted on during the course of the academic year. In the first year through, whilst I involved senior staff in lesson observations following training based on my experience as an OFSTED inspector, I compiled the remainder of the report. In its first year, the ownership of the report reflected the unease I felt concerning the competency of the middle managers, responsible for subject areas, in being able to construct an objective report based on sound evidence and applying understood criteria. To a certain extent this could have been interpreted as a lack of trust about the professional standards of the managers concerned. On the other hand it created a professional development opportunity and in succeeding years staff have increasingly taken ownership of the annual review process as their competencies have increased. Over time, the school, through various modes of training, has successfully addressed the competency deficit identified in the summer term of 1998.

"The Subject Reviews have given the teachers access to the correct language; they have empowered the teachers. The framework has enabled the staff to self-evaluate. The reviews are centred on strengths and weaknesses and the staff expect to evaluate their weaknesses. The review process is now standard practice and is embedded into the academic year. The reviews are good for sharing practice and keeping the Leadership Group informed". (LG, Semi-structured interview, January 16th 2006)

The completion of the annual subject review was as much about raising the issue of accountability as raising standards of pupil performance – the two aspects are intertwined. It was also concerned with providing exemplar material, written objectively and based on explicit criteria, which subject leaders could use with their teams. Because it had been constructed by myself with only minimal input from subject leaders, it gave the subject leader considerable strength to instigate changes within their

subject areas. To a certain extent they could distance themselves from the report by attributing negative or critical comments to the headteacher or leadership group – in a way it created an opportunity for subject areas to work in teams whilst at the same time being made aware of deficiencies in standards and performance. As a registered OFSTED inspector I was able to legitimise actions and comments with the authority vested through qualification. Secondly, because the school would be subject to an external inspection within six months it proved to be a very useful catalyst for change in departmental practice and the annual subject review was the vehicle for that change.

The annual subject review challenged practice and questioned standards. Through it, the expectations implicit in the schools vision and stated aims were being brought to the attention of day-to-day practitioners and influencing classroom performance.

The perceived reasons for improved performance were explored with the participants in the semi-structured interviews. Typical of the responses elicited were:

“Together with the structures and policies put in place, subject reviews have played a significant part by raising accountability, purpose and providing a long term understanding of the need for change”. (LG, Semi-structured interview, November 13th 2003)

“Accountability (through the subject review) has raised standards”. (HY, Semi-structured interview, November 23rd 2003)

“The vision of the school has been pushed forward right from the start and we are being pushed in departments. There is the correct focus in subject areas now”. (SL, Semi-structured interview, December 12th 2003)

On expectations the 1999 subject review included comments such as:

“There seemed little urgency, pace, challenge or expectation which limited the enjoyment, excitement and learning experiences that [] should bring to pupils”. (CH, Subject Review 1999, p13 & 44)

and

“One consequence of this rather narrow questioning technique was to limit opportunities for the development of problem solving skills and a more divergent thinking approach”. (CH, Subject Review 1999, p44)

Through the annual subject review it was possible to bring a consistency to the way in which subject areas were managed and led. The purpose was to unite the teaching staff through a common vision and the development of leadership teams that had the capacity and competency to bring about change consistent with the school’s vision and aspirations. The quality of the self-evaluation and planning for improvement was commented on in the inspection report of 2000 and 2006, where the significance of the annual subject reviews was recognised as being instrumental in raising standards.

“The effectiveness of this work reflects the rigour that the headteacher has brought to the issues of school improvement...Very detailed reviews of all departments have been based on test and examination performance, teaching and management. The effective analysis, which is overall a strength of the school, resulted in the setting of targets for improvement in mainstream subjects, which has generally been achieved”. (School Inspection Report, 2000, p16)

“Members of the school’s leadership group have an extremely comprehensive and secure knowledge of the establishment’s strengths and limitations. The extensive knowledge is achieved through outstandingly thorough and systematic arrangements including:

rigorous and challenging departmental reviews undertaken by senior managers, in close consultation with subject leaders”. (School Inspection Report, 2006, p33)

Strand 1 of the school development was mainly carried out during the period April 1998 to August 1999. During this period much of the leadership was concerned with establishing clear frameworks for effective operational management. Running in tandem was the strategic intent of changing the expectations of pupils, staff, governors and parents. Whilst establishing the operational framework was mainly a desk orientated management task, changing expectations involved proactive leadership

intervention. Proactive leadership was enacted through assemblies, prize giving, school newsletter, establishing subject reviews and staff meetings together with other public occasions.

The inspection of 2006 recognised the communications the school had developed with all those involved with the school when they wrote,

“Outstanding consultation with all involved with the school, including parents, pupils, and governors, as well as teachers”. (School Inspection Report, 2006, p33)

“Strong positive partnerships with parents...good features include...the opportunities parents have to discuss issues especially in respect of the headteacher’s Saturday morning ‘surgeries’, which are an outstanding contribution”. (School Inspection Report, 2006, p25)

A transforming leader is a moral agent, setting the ground rules for social and professional interactions, and behavioural expectations underpinned by a strong moral framework and a consistently applied system of values and beliefs. Strand 1 reflected my belief system, values and educational philosophy, through which I established the moral, ethical and social rules for engagement and high expectations for pupil and staff performance; perhaps exemplified by the findings of the 2006 inspection report in which it was recorded:

“Many members of staff ‘go the extra mile’ to provide high quality learning experiences for learners within and beyond the formal curriculum”. (School Inspection Report, 2006, p3)

Strand 2 – Developing leadership competencies

Introduction

Strand 1 was characterised by an autocratic leadership style, where the positional authority vested in the headteacher role enabled decisions to be taken, policies to be developed and the vision for the school to be established with minimal consultation. Most forums were used for information giving rather than educational debate; tight control was exercised in every area of the school to ensure compliance to the prescribed policies and directives.

“The leadership style was brusque, abrupt, to the point and autocratic but we realised why because things needed to be done immediately and sharing with others delays implementation”. (SL, Semi-structured interview, 8th December 2003)

The same member of staff continued by suggesting reasons why the leadership style was as they described.

“Separate departments were doing their own thing, there was no overarching strategic plan articulated and individually members of staff had separate visions”. (SL, Semi-structured interview, 8th December 2003)

The leadership style sometimes led to confrontations and, at times, a tense atmosphere in the school but it was necessary for a number of reasons. Firstly, the imminent threat of the next inspection necessitated that a clear structure and framework had to be developed in a short time and secondly, those staff in senior positions within the school lacked the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies to be effective leaders; there was a competency deficit. Strand 2 was concerned with the professional development so that staff acquired the competencies needed to bring about educational change and assume a leadership role in the school. The leadership exercised during this period of

development drew heavily on autocratic, instructional and transactional leadership styles. Strand 2 was primarily concerned with developing leadership potential in the school. In this section I look at the part subject leader training, data analysis, and the development of collaborative practices in the development of leadership competencies.

Subject leader training

Although the annual subject reviews were instrumental in equipping middle managers for leading their teams and changing the culture of the school, it was also important to encourage collaboration between subject leaders so that the vision, aims and objectives of the school became common currency with a shared understanding of what this meant for practice. The disparate nature of subject departments was highlighted as a significant issue pre-1998 during the semi-structured interviews, and, I believe, partly responsible for the underperformance of the school in this period.

“The Heads of Department were purely administrative roles, there was no sharing of good practice between subject areas and no understanding of the whole school perspective.” (HY, Semi-structured interview, November 23rd 2003)

To resolve the lack of clear direction and inconsistencies between subject areas, a number of initiatives were instigated between 2000 and 2003. The most influential, in terms of encouraging collaborative working practices, were the series of subject leader training sessions that focused on the leadership role of the subject leader. It was considered vitally important to develop this role if the overall vision for the school was to be translated into working practices; for this to happen there had to be a consensus and consistency within and between subject teams.

"I have been professionally developed through the subject leader training put in place; you started giving us knowledge; more people have been empowered through controlled knowledge and skills". (SL, Semi-structured interview, January 3rd 2006)

With the inspection 2006 reporting,

"Subject leaders have been successful in changing the culture and ethos of the school for the better". (School Inspection Report, 2006, p30)

In the first year of the rolling programme of subject leader training, in-house material was developed in the form of a fictional school, based around an actual school's OFSTED report, and placed on the school intranet. Subject leaders were free to interrogate this material and exercises designed to cover a range of educational and leadership issues were completed.

Professional Development Activity - 1

"Martyn teaches at Newton School. He entered the teaching profession late having spent 10 years in manufacturing industry where he ended up as a manager on the shop floor. He is forty-seven and has been at the school for 12 years. In this time he has been overlooked in the promotion stakes on three separate occasions and has remained on the main professional scale since starting at the school. Martyn teaches in the science department and periodically assists with the teaching of maths in Year 9.

He is a vociferous and cynical member of the staff room, keen to criticise any new initiatives and waxes lyrically about the 'good old days' when pupils knew their place.

Recent initiatives in education have passed him by as he proclaims what was good enough for him, is good enough for the pupils he teaches, it never stopped him from getting on. His relationships with the pupils are frosty and on numerous occasions he loses his temper with them when they fail to listen or produce the work he wants. He is unable to make the connection between the way he teaches and the way in which pupils respond. His powers of analytical thinking are limited and he is generally unimaginative in his approach to teaching and learning. His classroom discipline is sound; pupils are generally too intimidated to challenge his authority.

He argues that pupils who fail to meet the grade or pass exams are examples of the way in which society has produced a nation of couch potatoes, incapable of thinking or doing things for themselves. Martyn does not reflect

on practice in a critical sense, placing all the responsibility for any underachievement squarely on the shoulders of the pupils he teaches. He also argues that it is well known that maths and science are quite hard and so it is not surprising, considering the quality of pupils at Newton High, that they produce poor examination results.

Assessment is an anathema to Martyn, who sees nothing wrong in telling pupils what he thinks. He doesn't see the need to give written feedback on assessments on the rare occasions he sets them and marking consists largely of ticks and crosses. Report statements tend to be one of three stock phrases he uses. 'Must try harder if he/she is to succeed', 'Less talk leads to more success' or 'I was pleasantly surprised by the results that (name) got – well done'. Targets are something you shoot at.

Since Martyn enjoys tending his allotment most nights of the week (when he says he can reminisce about the good old days) and does not like to spend any time after school attending meetings or parent's evenings. In 12 years he has never supported any activity put on by the school and refuses point blank to be involved with school trips, working parties or staff social occasions. Martyn who is staff representative for one of the main teaching unions and knows his rights.

Martyn is in your department and has confided in you that he is going to complete the threshold application form and would be grateful if you could take a look at it before passing it on to Mr Blackadder.

How would you respond as his Subject Leader to this situation and begin to address some of the serious shortfalls in Martyn's professional behaviour?"
(CH, Training Manual for Subject Leaders, September 2000, p10)

The method was chosen firstly, because it presented a non-confrontational way of raising issues that still needed tackling and secondly, it enabled the subject leaders' team to develop a collaborative approach as they formulated answers to the tasks given. The dialogue and ensuing debate fostered a clearer understanding of the importance of having a vision and how this could be implemented through all areas of the school, enabling a clearer understanding of the leadership role within specific curriculum contexts.

"The senior management team has insufficiently stringent procedures to monitor developments by departments and to evaluate their effectiveness. There is no formal system to review the performance of a department and little use of data on standards and quality to set priorities for subject leaders. Departmental review is unsystematic and unplanned. Line- management

arrangements are clear on paper but are not helping to raise standards quickly because of poor quality monitoring and evaluation. Members of the senior management team have not set out sufficiently clear expectations for the frequency and purposes of the lesson observation programme. As a result, some heads of department have carried out far more observations than others, and the quality of some is far better than others.

Discuss and formulate an action plan that addresses the issues raised by this section of the inspection report". (CH, Training Manual for Subject Leaders, September 2000, p11)

As part of the introduction to the subject leadership training programme a Power Point presentation was made in which the importance of leadership was highlighted, suggesting that leadership:

- *Is motivational*
- *Can be communicated*
- *Is inspirational*
- *Is innovative*
- *Is developmental*
- *Is evaluative*

and impacts on teachers, pupils and parents. (Subject Leader training notes, September 15th, 2000, p1)

The Power Point presentation was accompanied by a task based on the fictitious school which asked the team to examine the inspection report on a particular subject and comment on whether or not the subject area had high expectations, whether effective leadership was being exercised and there was evidence to indicate effective monitoring and evaluation was taking place (Subject leader training booklet 2000, p20). A flip-chart summary of how a subject leader may show evidence of the characteristics of effective leadership enabled subject leaders to come to a common understanding and equipped them with reflective tools with which to evaluate their own performance.

"Subject leaders meetings and subject reviews are helpful for monitoring and evaluation; making subject areas accountable; by having the formal process it ensures all subjects have common aims and direction related to

the whole school vision". (SL, Semi-structured interview, January 16th 2006)

Over a period of time the competencies of subject leaders were increased and as a result departments were run more effectively and strong teams developed. The increased competencies of subject leaders can be evidenced through an extract from a letter of resignation from a subject leader following their appointment as a Senior Lecturer on the Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) in a university and the feedback from the questionnaire-based survey summarised in Figure 16.

"I wish to inform you that I have been offered the position of Senior Lecturer at UWE in Bristol...I would like to thank you for the support you have given me...I feel that without the training I have received at ...High School I would not have been able to secure this new appointment". (SL, Letter of resignation, May 2005)

	Rating	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Question								
Creates CPD opportunities to enable school objectives to be met		26.1%	47.8%	17.4%	8.7%			
	Cumulative percentage	26.1%	73.9%	91.3%	100%			
Takes personal responsibility that team meets their objectives		39.1%	21.7%	30.4%	4.3%	4.3%		
	Cumulative percentage	39.1%	60.9%	91.3%	95.7%	100%		
Provides intellectual stimulus and fosters a learning culture		47.8%	30.4%	17.4%		4.3%		
		47.8%	78.3%	95.7%		100%		

Figure 16 Participants' perceptions about professional development.

(Rating A = very strongly agree, G = Very strongly disagree. Total responses to questions shown N = 69)

Whilst considerable authority was vested in subject leaders through the subject reviews and the subject leader training, the importance of high expectations, teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluation, target setting and the vision of the school needed to be shared with the whole staff and to indicate public support by the leadership and management of the school for the work of the subject leaders.

“The major causes of improved results seem to me to be clarity of vision, professional development, the regular scrutiny of what we are doing, a coherent framework of policies, subject reviews, accountability and an emphasis on teaching and learning”. (LG, Semi-structured interview, November 19th 2003)

The leadership group, established in 2000, appreciated that not all subject leaders were of the same quality, had the same competencies or fully understood the holistic nature of the school vision and therefore determined that occasions needed to be provided for whole staff training centred on the focus areas determined for the subject reviews.

The variation in subject leader and staff competency levels was tackled in a number of different ways. At the start of the academic year I addressed all the staff and set the scene for the coming year. The address incorporated a detailed and extensive analysis of the examination performance of the previous year – but more importantly it was used to raise challenging questions and for reinforcing the vision of the school.

“At the lower end of the ability spectrum there is also a disturbing picture emerging. In each of the core subjects there are significantly higher percentages of boys operating at levels 3 & 4 than girls. In English 39% of the boys are operating at levels 3 & 4 compared with 11% for the girls. In maths the figures are 32% and 13% and in science 26% and 18% respectively. The implications for the year group is that within two years there may be a significant number of disaffected boys going through to GCSE unless we address this issue now – this may impinge on the performance of the whole year 11 cohort. The same picture emerges from the analysis of the teacher assessments for the non-core subjects.

There is evidence to suggest that in the past certain subject areas have failed to consistently apply the homework policy, give weak and de-motivating homework tasks, do not effectively pursue pupils who fail to hand work in and sometimes fail to apply consistent standards of marking or give useful feedback on work submitted. The consequences of this are very apparent. Pupils know how to play the system and exploit loopholes created by the differential standards and expectations of staff – and in this boys are rather more adroit than the girls.

The evidence also suggests that the middle to lower ability groups experience lower expectations, both in the quality of the task and the quality of the marking and sometimes teaching than higher ability groups. Consequently

over time, starting in year 7, a culture develops, especially with in lower ability groups and boys in particular, where it is acceptable to give in low quality work and be praised for it or no work at all safe in the knowledge that they will not be chased too hard for it, culminating in a poor work ethic, less than satisfactory approach to preparing for examinations or assessments and a general underperformance characterised by increasing levels of indiscipline within the class context, ultimately leading to disenfranchised groups of pupils, with boys in particular.

Subjects need to examine closely how they are to improve on this situation and establish clear frameworks for dealing with pupils who fail to achieve the expectations of the subject and for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the assessments given to the various teaching groups. Subject areas have a responsibility for establishing a clear framework of sanctions and for supporting staff in the application of them. Subject leaders have a particular responsibility for ensuring high expectations are evidenced through the quality of the teaching, schemes of work, assessment tasks and behaviour of pupils.

Subject leaders will also be expected to review current practice in their areas; review schemes of work, and through teamwork develop appropriate teaching strategies. Collaboration is an essential ingredient of effective subject teams and I am sure the maths department won't mind me mentioning some of the initiatives they have introduced over recent years as a way of inculcating subject expectations within a collaborative supportive framework – a model that other subject areas may wish to emulate.

As part of the Subject Review this year, the Leadership Group will be keen to explore how subject areas are developing a collaborative approach to their work, how the Subject Leader promotes high expectations and the support mechanism that have been put in place to help staff develop appropriate and effective teaching strategies and how pupils are supported by the subject area through extra-curricular initiatives.

Subject Leaders need to identify how they intend addressing the points under Section 1.1 of the School Development Plan 2002 – 2005 which relates to the difference in achievement between boys and girls performance.

As in previous years I have made use of KS3 to KS4 multipliers, MIDYS data and the Fischer Trust data analysis to arrive at the targets for GCSE in 2005 – at this stage individual subject areas need to translate these into actual numbers and names for their subject. To assist in the process I have produced lists of upper, middle and lower ability pupils based on KS3 results for subjects to use. The multipliers are 0.85, 0.475 and 0.15 respectively. As I have indicated previously these are used to give all subject areas a base line target which they can chose to increase according to the individual knowledge they have of the cohort in their subject. It is not acceptable however to produce targets using lower multipliers". (CH, Staff meeting notes, September 1st, 2003)

The impact and importance of the opening staff meeting of the academic year, where a detailed analysis of performance is given, can be judged from the comments given during the semi-structured interviews.

“The leadership group and CH are very supportive but have high expectations; if not meeting them there is a fear of reprisals, fear of my subject going on the board in September, like name and shame. Humiliation is what it is – but in place is a supportive structure”. (SL, Semi-structured interview, January 16th 2006)

“From a personal point of view, like seeing we have done well. For me it makes me think; why didn’t I do very well there, go back to department and assess; it causes me to be a bit more reflective”. (SL, Semi-structured interview, January 3rd 2006)

“By placing examination results in the public domain it makes them raise the game, they like to perform”. (HY, Semi-structured interview, January 3rd 2006)

The purpose of the start of term staff meeting has been to make explicit the expectations the leadership group has of staff – in terms of teaching, behaviour and commitment. The statements made lend considerable muscle to the subject leader’s role since they claim, rightly, that this is what management want. The publication of the subject reviews and examination data analysis in the public domain of the staff common room and on the school’s intranet served to reinforce the expectations whilst at the same time making staff more publicly accountable for the quality of their work. I felt that unless underperformance and unsatisfactory practice is challenged both privately and publicly, the changes desired would not occur. To a certain extent I have dismantled the ‘no blame’ culture and placed the responsibility and accountability firmly in the domain of each member of staff, middle and senior managers of the school. Although it does not follow that the senior management have washed their hands of taking responsibility for failure or underachievement where the cause can be shown to be linked to ineffective leadership or management, but have signalled in a

most direct way that what occurs in classrooms is the prime responsibility of teaching staff and what occurs within departments is the prime responsibility of subject leaders; they are not encouraged, and neither is it acceptable, to blame 'them' (the senior management) for their own shortcomings.

I have already discussed subject reviews in Strand 1 in the context of raising expectations and monitoring and evaluation. In this strand, I extend the earlier discussion to demonstrate how subject reviews were used as a vehicle for competency building for subject leaders. That is, they were instrumental in developing the leadership skills of subject leaders. When originally introduced in 1999, they were specifically designed to raise expectations through accountability and served the purpose of questioning practice and holding people to account. The subject review still has accountability as one of its main purposes but it has also been used to engage subject leaders in developmental activities related to their own professional development. The subject reviews were used to raise awareness of subject leaders to current educational practice and to establish a reflective culture in the school. By establishing particular focus points for each review it was possible to ensure consistency between subject areas and share the vision through the school, in sharp contrast to the previous leadership style where:

"Individually members of staff had separate visions, doing things their own way. There was no overarching strategic plan articulated by the SMT to the remainder of the staff". (LG, Semi-structured interview, November 11th 2003)

The impact of the subject review on the leadership and management of subject areas can be mapped by looking through the minutes of department meetings in the period 1997 – 2003. In one particular subject area the minutes throughout 1997 and 1998 followed roughly the same agenda, consisting of individual members of the staff going

through their classes identifying pupils who were working well and those who were not working well. There was no discussion of teaching and learning strategies or whole school policies, nor any attempt made to understand in terms of classroom performance why pupils either worked or didn't. There was no evidence of developmental work. Examination of other department minutes shows a similar pattern emerging and it would be reasonable to conclude that most subject meetings were administrative with subject leaders exercising mainly a management function rather than leadership role.

"Professionally they did not have the terminology. Heads of departments didn't know what they were doing. The headteacher was limited in his knowledge of how to develop staff". (LG, Semi-structured interview, December 2003)

There was noticeable change, repeated across all subjects, following the subject review in 1999. The review focused on a number of areas including examination data analysis, teacher targets, school development plan and lesson observations. Each subject area was given a written report that had to be conveyed to the rest of the subject team. In this way, educational terminology, previously not part of the mainstream working vocabulary was introduced. For example, grade differentials and differential performance of boys and girls in relation to examination performance; quantitative targets and success criteria in relation to teacher targets; monitoring and evaluation in terms of pupil and staff performance and so on were provided. The following statement was not untypical of the comments included in the review.

"There is a need to broaden teaching strategies to encompass pace and expectation, the use of questions, the development of group work activities and the integration of listening, reading and speaking skills in schemes of work" (CH, Subject Review 1999, p7),

The outcome of the increased awareness of key educational issues and the reduction of the competency deficit can be seen in the minutes of subject meetings from 2000

onwards. Although the first subject review took place in September 1999, evidence of the impact only became evident from about June 2000 as subject areas began addressing the issues raised in the first review. For example, in October 2000 a meeting of a particular subject area, two items on the agenda were 'the vision of the department' and 'good lesson practice' both of which had been mooted as focus areas for the annual subject review of 2000. The subject area had moved significantly away from referring to lists of pupils to developmental work and producing a vision statement for the subject that was in-line with the whole school vision.

In this way, subject leaders became aware of, and shared in, the vision of the school and consequently all teaching staff became knowledgeable about the schools aims and objectives and the contribution each member of staff could make in achieving the vision. Through choosing different focal points for each year's subject review, it was possible to strategically map out staff development to meet the needs of the school. Any INSET training, either internally organised or externally provided, could be linked to the focal areas of the subject review for that particular year. Whilst the focal areas for the subject review in 1999 had been examinations, teacher targets and the school development plan in 2000 they included identifying vision and progress, girls' and boys' motivation and self-evaluation.

The development of the leadership qualities of middle managers has been significant. For example, the most recent minutes of the department discussed earlier include extensive work on teaching and learning, integration of basic skills in schemes of work and SEN matters. Under teaching and learning is written:

"...we must self-evaluate and question why we have this bulge at L3 and 4 at KS3...the quality of teaching is crucial for these groups...continue to share good practice within the classroom...the department acknowledged that we

could help our pupils by providing them with as stimulating a classroom and dynamic environment as possible". (SL, Subject department minutes, November 20th, 2003)

The inspection 2006 reports that,

"The application of the headteacher's methodologies, including competency development and distributed leadership, has been outstandingly successful in sustaining and improving performance". (School Inspection Report, 2006, p30)

The development of staff competencies over the period of change has enabled them to take full responsibility for their own subject areas. The fact that subject reviews in 2003 were carried out largely by subject leaders is evidence of this. The only aspects that have remained in senior management control are the examination data analysis and lesson observations. A standard template is produced so that subject leaders address the same issues (the focus areas for that particular year) and completes a self-evaluation before a formal interview with the leadership group. At this meeting new action points are agreed and an action plan drawn up for the year. Since subject leaders have ownership of the process they are more motivated and more likely to challenge assumptions with their subject teams. It was important to inculcate the collective efficiency of staff, subject leaders in particular, in order that they could engage in organisational learning. The way in which the leadership processes post-1998 have focused on teaching and learning, vision, professional development and accountability are in sharp contrast to those described by a member of the leadership group to describe the period pre-1998.

"The PH was very confrontational with external agencies which acted as a displacement activity away from teaching and learning. He perceived political enemies and there were battles to fight, he had no real understanding of teaching and learning. His values centred on behaviour, quietness, appearance and demeanour, he lacked a long-term vision for the school, often relying on crisis management for survival. The PH was good at public relations, could bluster his way through most situations and

privately admitted to me that he was first and foremost a salesman". (LG, Semi-structured interview, December 6th 2003)

The 2003 template for completion by subject leaders included the following:

- Consider last year's review and identify any targets that have been achieved, any on-going targets may be transferred to this year's action points;
- SDP and Whole School Vision;
- Underachievement of boys;
- Evaluation and Reflective Practice;
- How do you assess the different attainment targets in your subject?
- Describe the formative and summative assessment procedures in your department;
- How do you use assessment to inform your lesson planning;
- How and where are your assessments recorded?
- How do you assess basic skills in your subject?
- Do you encourage pupils to complete self-assessments?
- Are pupils aware of level/grade criteria in your subject?
- Are your assessment objectives indicated in your schemes of work?
- Describe how you differentiate by task resource and outcome;
- How do you differentiate examination papers?
- How do you involve members of your department in reviewing and writing schemes of work? How often do you review your handbook?
- What are the focus areas for 2003/04?
- Identify the main agenda items for this year's departmental meetings;
- How will you use the SDP to structure meetings?
- What significant developments will your department achieve this year?
- Describe how you lead your department:
- How do you foster teamwork in your department?

"The Action Plan will be discussed and agreed during the interview. However, you may wish to identify one target for each of the headings". (LG, Subject review pro-forma, September 2003, p2)

"We consider the implementation of the school's leadership and management programme, as fundamental to the maximising of the contribution of staff and in support of the continued success of the school". (CG, Headteacher Performance Review, January 13th 2005, p1)

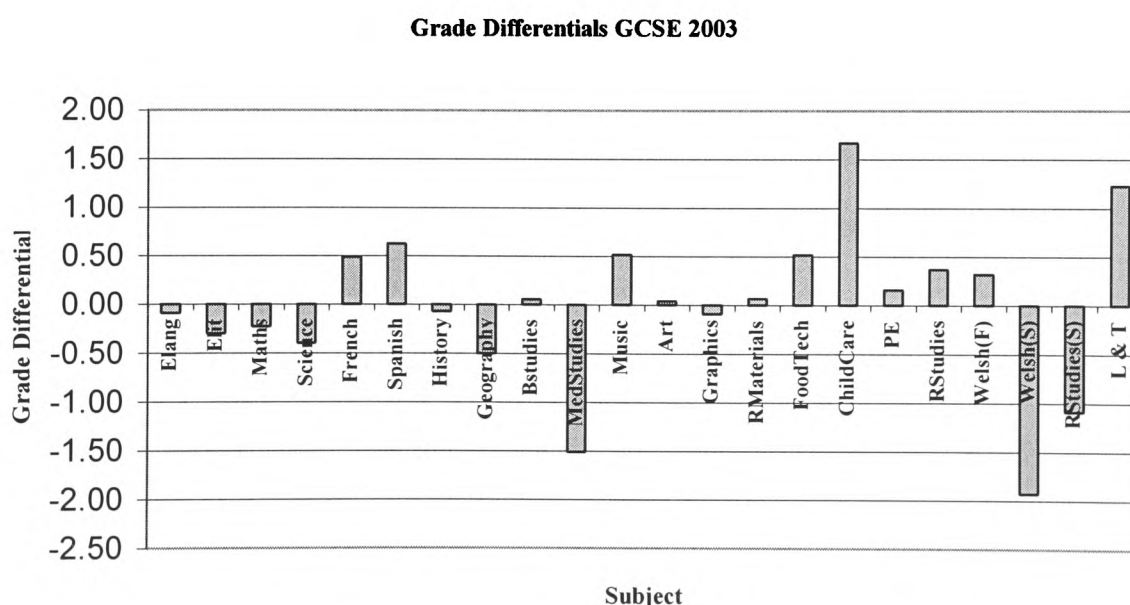
"CH has established success by introducing procedures and sifting out weak practitioners and challenging underperformance through Subject Reviews". (PG, Semi-structured interview, January 7th 2006)

Data analysis

Prior to 1998, the use of performance data was limited. Comparisons between the school's performance and local and national figures were thin on the ground, no effort was made to measure the value added between one key stage and another and

individual staff performances were not monitored. There was no system in place for tracking the performance of pupils as they moved through the school. The development of in-depth analysis of data was a key element in raising standards, enabling effective targets to be set and the monitoring of performance of individual teaching staff.

Initially the analysis focused on the Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 transition and in particular the outcomes in terms of GCSE performance. The analysis of the results included measuring the grade differentials for each subject, the differential performance of boys and girls, comparisons of the grade differentials of each subject teacher and examining the value added from Key Stage 3. The information was made public so that all staff was aware of the outcomes of the analysis for each curriculum area, an example of which is shown in Figure 17.



(CH, KS4 examination data analysis information presented to staff September 2003)

Figure 17 GCSE grade differentials by subject 2003

The graph shows the grade differentials for GCSE subjects in 2003. The grade differential is determined by calculating the average points score by the pupils for each

subject and comparing this with the average points score of the pupil for all their subjects. For example, a pupil may have an average score of 5.4 grades for the nine subjects they sat at GCSE. If the point score in English is 4.0 grades, then relative to the other subjects English would produce a -1.4 grade differential. For the pupil concerned, their performance in English would have been below that of their other subjects. By summing the grade differentials for all pupils in a subject and finding the average, a final grade differential figure is determined. In the graph, Media Studies shows a large negative grade differential, whereas Child Care shows a large positive grade differential. The implication for the pupils being that they achieved significantly in Child Care compared to Media Studies. The advantage of this type of analysis is that it does not depend on the ability level of the pupil, since grade differentials are a relative measure. The introduction of grade differentials enabled weak performance to be challenged, where previously reasons for under performance had been attributed solely to pupil abilities rather than teacher expectations or teaching competence. Placing grade differentials, together with other examination data analysis, in the public domain of the staff room is perceived by those interviewed as being instrumental in raising standards.

"They generate a bit of competition between subject areas. I like to compare my subject with others and look at the grade differentials more than the bald percentages for those achieving grade C or higher. If you are held accountable it may motivate us to do well". (SL, Semi-structured interview, January 16th 2006)

"The school is data rich with high levels of expertise in supporting and mentoring pupils... You know that the school's strong self-evaluation/review ethos will address any performance shortfalls by subject teams". (External adviser report to the Governing Body, Headteacher Performance Review, December 30th 2004, p4)

Targets for Key Stage 4 were agreed in the first term of the Year 10 GCSE programme, based on Key Stage 3 results. A multiplication factor, which linked Key Stage 3 performance with information gleaned from national statistics and evidence from statistics developed by the unitary authority in conjunction with the advisory service was used to determine appropriate targets. Targets were agreed for whole school, subjects and individual pupils.

Analysis of the Key Stage 3 results led to explicit targets for grade C or above in each subject area for each named pupil, thereby allowing tracking of the progress of a pupil to take place over the two year GCSE course. The differential performance between targets and outcomes also formed part of the feedback to teaching staff. By collating the targets set by staff, an overall picture could be constructed of the likely outcomes in any particular year. Where an individual pupil showed that across the board they appeared to be underachieving a mentoring programme could be put in place.

The collection of data now occurs across the school every six weeks, and the analysis have become much more sophisticated with the inclusion of potential and actual grades in each subject area regularly analysed and information concerning all pupils printed out for Form Tutors each half term. Form Tutors use the information to negotiate at the individual level, targets for improvement for the following half term. At individual pupil level, a summary sheet is provided detailing the actual achievement grades in individual subjects, the potential grade determined through analysis of prior attainment information and a grade differential for each subject.

“CH has kept the Governing Body informed of the tracking system and how this has been used to drive up standards. He has now developed it across the whole school with data being reviewed every half term. Its effectiveness in raising standards is linked to the way the information contained in the pupil

summary sheet enables subject teacher, form tutors, heads of year and heads of upper/lower school to agree targets for improvements which can be tracked and modified over time with individuals". (GB Report to External Adviser, Headteacher Performance Review, November 2004, p2)

The grade differential is a measure of how well the student is doing in a particular subject relative to other subjects that they are following. It is calculated by assigning a points to grades achieved where A* = 8 and G = 1, and determining the average points across the number of subjects being studied. A comparison is then made between the average points and the points achieved in each subject, giving the grade differential. A negative differential indicates that relative to their other subjects the pupil is underachieving in that subject, greater than -0.5 grades is considered to be significant and targets are agreed with the pupil to improve in that subject area. Individual counselling is given on the methods that could be used to achieve the desired improvement. Pupils have shown considerable interest in the information and it has been a useful tool for staff to use both with pupils and parents to challenge underperformance. Where the evidence indicates that in any particular subject all the grade differentials are significantly negative it has provided a useful tool for exploring and challenging underperformance in classroom instruction. The tracking system has served the dual purpose of challenging both pupil and teacher low expectations and underachievement. Staff have become proficient in handling data and see it as a valuable tool in raising standards.

"Data interpretation has been very useful in informing what is happening and accountability has raised standards". (HY, Semi-structured interview, 6th December 2003)

Increasingly as more data is entered into the tracking system it has been computerised so that staff can interrogate the information it contains. For example, Figure 18 shows

the enquiries sheet for Year 7 pupils available to all staff and held on the school's intranet.

Teaching group lists	Key Stage 2 Results	Always press 'clear' before making an enquiry
Red List	Levels 4 & 5 English	Clear
	Levels 4 & 5 Maths	Attendance update
Yellow List	Levels 4 & 5 Science	Less than or equal to 90%
	Green List	Level 5 in Eng, Ma & Sci
	Blue List	Greater than 13

(Tracking system Year 7, September 2003)

Figure 18 Enquiries window for Year 7 tracking

A member of staff can access information concerning prior attainment at Key Stage 2, attendance and/or group lists by pushing the appropriate button on the screen and a list is automatically printed.

The summary over the page shows the range of information that is given to form tutors, pupil and pastoral tutor every six weeks from the start of year 10 to the end of year 11. The information includes an individual pupil subject analysis showing KS3 SATS levels, potential grades based on the notional added value given by the school, and operational grades. Also included on the pupil summary sheet is a box to record the targets agreed within subjects and between the pupil, form tutor and pastoral tutor. The other two tables show part of the spreadsheet that is used to record and calculate the grades in each subject for each pupil and the grade differential in that subject. The second table provides subject leaders with a summary of the percentages of pupils achieving specific grades and the overall grade differential for the subject and the third

table a summary of the percentages achieving the key GCSE indicators for that reference point in time and allowing the leadership group to see whether the year group is on course to achieve its targets. Once the raw data has been entered, the computer using the functions programmed in to the tracking system spreadsheet carries out calculations automatically.

Pupil Tracking Summary Sheet

Pupil Name Form

Core	Key Stage 3	Potential	Sept. 03	Nov-03
English Lang	6	B	D	C
English Lit		B	B	C
Maths	5	C	C	E
Science	4	C	C	C
French		B	D	D
Welsh		C	C	D

Subject Options	Sept. 03	Nov. 03
Child Dev	C	C
RStudies	C	C
Travel & T	C	A

Agreed targets to be completed before the next assessment point

Form Tutor:

Date:

Pupil Name	B/G		Elan		Elit		Maths			
				Diff.			Diff.		Diff.	
Pupil A	B	C	5	0.67	C	5	0.67	E	3	-1.33
Pupil B	G	C	5	0.50	C	5	0.50	E	3	-1.50
Pupil C	B	E	3	-0.89	E	3	-0.89	D	4	0.11
Pupil D	B	C	5	-0.56	B	6	0.44	B	6	0.44
Pupil E	G	B	6	-0.56	A	7	0.44	A	7	0.44
Pupil F	B	E	3	-0.13	E	3	-0.13	G	1	-2.13
Pupil G	G	C	5	1.00	D	4	0.00	E	3	-1.00
Pupil H	B	C	5	0.38	C	5	0.38	E	3	-1.63
Pupil I	G	A	7	1.11	B	6	0.11	C	5	-0.89
Pupil J	B	C	5	0.78	C	5	0.78	E	3	-1.22
			Elan			Elit			Maths	
			0A*	0.0%		0A*	0.0%		0A*	0.0%
			5A	3.1%		4A	2.5%		16A	10.0%
			19B	11.9%		33B	21.0%		20B	12.5%
			60C	37.5%		45C	28.7%		19C	11.9%
			52D	32.5%		49D	31.2%		32D	20.0%
			20E	12.5%		21E	13.4%		39E	24.4%
			2F	1.3%		2F	1.3%		21F	13.1%
			2G	1.3%		3G	1.9%		12G	7.5%
			0U	0.0%		0U	0.0%		1U	0.6%
			0X	0.0%		0X	0.0%		0X	0.0%
Entry and Grade Diff.			160	-0.03		157	-0.08		160	-0.57
%A* - C			53%			52%			34%	
	≥1 A's	≥1 C's	≥1 G's	≥5 G's	≥5 C's	Core	Points			
	29.8%	87.0%	99.4%	99.4%	54.0%	28.5%	40.13			

(Year 10 Tracking Information GCSE grades September 2003)

Examination of the tracking information for Year 10 in September 2003 enables a number of issues and questions to be raised both at individual pupil level and subject level. The summary sheet for the pupil shown, indicates that the pupil is currently underachieving in English language and French relative to their potential, based on prior attainment information. Whereas, in other subjects their operating grade is at the expected level, and in travel and tourism they are making significant progress. The form tutor would want to explore the reasons for the underachievement in English and French and agree targets for improvement in these two areas with the pupil.

The table, showing the grades and grade differentials in English language, English literature and maths also reveal a number of interesting patterns that could be explored at pupil, subject or leadership level. For example, the grade differentials in mathematics are generally negative, significantly so compared with the other two subjects, ranging from -2.13 to 0.44 , raising important questions. The significant negative grade differential may indicate problems with the teaching and learning strategies being used within the subject, or suggest weaknesses with the assessment instrument or reveal attitude problems of the pupil to the subject. These would be explored with the pupil and subject teacher. The pupil information shows that Pupil F has negative grade differentials across each of the three subjects, ranging from -0.13 to -2.13 grades. From which it may be hypothesised that Pupil F under performs across all subjects and would need to be explored. In investigating the cause, consideration would be given to the level of attendance, the teaching groups the pupil is in and the pupils' homework track record. In this way a composite picture can be constructed, enabling where appropriate, corrective action to be put in place. Usually, where a pupil is underachieving in the majority of subjects a parental interview is arranged. This

enables targets to be made explicit and agreed action plans put in place with the full knowledge of the parent and pupil concerned.

The overall summary table gives the percentage of pupils at each GCSE grade together with the overall grade differential. It is useful for informing the deputy head (curriculum) how that subject compares with others. In the results shown, mathematics shows a significant negative grade differential compared with the other two subjects and the percentages achieving grade F is substantively higher than English language and literature. This may indicate or suggest a concern with the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in the lower ability sets or with the assessment instrument being used to determine the grades being achieved by the pupils. The bottom table gives an overview of the performance in the key indicators used at GCSE, enabling the leadership group over time, to determine the emerging pattern and whether the cohort are likely to achieve the overall targets agreed for the group and more importantly put in place corrective action where there appears to be a shortfall in expectations.

In 2004 the information was, for the first time, shared with parents as part of the progress reports sent to them. The data sent includes information about grade differentials in each subject, attendance record, Key Stage 3 results, MidYIS score and target grades in each subject. From September 2005, the tracking system will be extended to include all pupils in the school. A copy of the progress report sent to parents in Year 10 in June 2005 is shown in Figure 19.

Year 10 Progress Report – June 2005

The purpose of this report is to keep you informed of the progress of your child.

The summary below will enable you to see whether your child is under performing, has made progress since the last report and if they are on target to achieve the grades they should at GCSE.

Name: **A. N. Other**

Form: **Y10C**

Tutor: **M Helper**

¹MidYIS Band: **D**

²Key Stage 3 Score: **12**

³Attendance in Autumn Term: **96%**

Attendance in Spring Term: **74%**

Subject	⁴ Potential GCSE grade	January 2005 grade	Current grade	⁵ Grade differential
Art				
Business Studies				
Drama				
English Language	D	F	E	-0.56
English Literature				
Food Technology				
French	C	F	D	0.44
Geography	D	D	D	0.44
Graphics				
History				
ICT	C	E	D	0.44
Key Skills				
Leisure & Tourism	E	E	E	-0.56
Mathematics	D	D	E	-0.56
Media Studies				
Music				
PE				
ResMaterials				
Religious Studies		C	F	-4.10
Science	D	C	D	0.44
Spanish				
Welsh			E	-0.56

Form Tutor comment:

1. There are four bands, A, B, C and D where band A represents pupils of well above average ability.
2. The KS3 score is determined by adding the levels in maths, science and English. The maximum is 21 and minimum 9.
3. Attendance of less than 90% is unsatisfactory, unless due to long-term illness.
4. Potential grades are based on prior attainment at KS3. They may change over time as a pupil progresses.
5. The grade differential indicates how your child's performance compares with others in the same subject. A negative value indicates they are doing less well. A value greater than – 0.5 grades is significant and should form part of targets for improvement. The average value is 0.0.

If you have any questions concerning this report please contact the Form Tutor at the school.

Figure 19 Example of Year 10 Progress Report, June 2005

The potential GCSE grade is based on prior performance at Key Stage 3 and the current grade represents the level that the pupil is currently operating at in that particular subject.

“The outcomes of review procedures and the associated analyses of data confirm that year on year the actions taken to bring about improvements have resulted in clearly measurable gains”. (School Inspection Report, 2006, p35)

Collaborative practices

Central to staff professional development has been the series of training sessions on teaching and learning, entitled ‘motivational teaching’. It is mentioned here because it played a significant part in developing collaborative practices amongst the whole staff, raising staff expectations and an understanding how the vision for the school could be translated into practice.

The first training session, entitled ‘motivational teaching’, involved the members of staff of a particular department giving a typical lesson to the rest of the staff. The department were chosen because they exemplified what the vision of the school was about – high expectations, motivational teaching, excellent working relations with pupils, outstanding academic achievements and supportive culture (both of colleagues and pupils). The rest of the teaching staff became the ‘class’ for the training session and were expected to respond as pupils in classes do. The activity was a novelty within the school, well received by staff, creating a number of amusing moments and a lot of laughter. The important part was the analysis of the lesson and what could be learnt from the activity, highlighting the key elements of successful lessons and defining what constituted a ‘good’ lesson. Teachers were being empowered; leaders were being developed.

“Leadership is important. Someone needs to make decisions and I feel that some people are natural leaders. I can see that people on the LG have lots

of ideas and other staff ask them questions and stuff. I'm not sure how it works but I know that you all monitor each other and CH is your top man. To be head takes guts and there must be lots of demands. You need to be dedicated. I think that the dedication must come from the top so that it is passed to all staff...I am aware of the monitoring stuff that takes place. I think that it is good that all staff, even senior staff, let people into their lessons. It make sme feel that teachers can't get away with rubbish lessons, no matter who they are. I have also picked up that teachers support each other. I see you all talking about serious stuff in the corridors and know that you work together. I just observe stuff like most kids". (PL, Year 13, Semi-structured interview, 4th January 2006)

A General Teacher Council grant of £3000 was awarded to the leadership group in the academic year 2001 – 2002 enabling action research to be undertaken in the school on teaching and learning. The project involved producing three videos, one concerned with pupils perceptions at KS3 of what constituted effective teaching, a video concerning sixth form lessons and the other consisting of evidence taken from across the school where the various elements identified by pupils were found to be occurring in practice. The video evidence was shown to all teaching staff as part of the programme of INSET training and the elements of what constituted effective teaching teased out and incorporated in schemes of work and classroom practice.

"The overwhelming finding was that pupil response and achievements are linked to teacher behaviour and the quality of instructional strategies used in the classroom. Pupils are also clear about those aspects that determine whether or not the lessons they experience are effective in helping them in the learning process and for motivating them to want to learn". (Teaching Research Scholarship report, p2, March 2002)

The impact of this initial piece of action research on the learning culture of the school has been enormous, with increasing numbers of staff wishing to carry out action research. Additional research projects have included examining boys under achievement, how extra-curricular activities can be used to motivate pupils and research into the performance of the various social/economic groups within the school – each attracting funding from the General Teaching Council. The outcome of the

initial research into teaching and learning resulted in the production of a commercial training pack entitled 'Towards Effective Teaching' available for other schools and an award by the Welsh Secondary Schools Association (WSSA) in 2002 for innovative ideas in education. There has been an enormous increase in the level of shared practice across the school and a greater degree of openness and support in classrooms and subject areas – the culture has become a learning culture for staff and pupils alike.

Teachers do not develop their strategies and styles of teaching entirely alone. Teaching strategies are not an exclusive individual matter; most of the problems that the teacher encounters have faced many similarly placed colleagues in the past. Over the years these colleagues develop ways of doing things, along with whole networks of associated educational beliefs and values in response to the characteristic and recurrent problems and circumstances they face in their work. Cultures of teaching help give meaning, support and identity to teachers and their work. Physically, teachers are often alone in their classrooms, psychologically, they never are. The outlooks and orientations of the colleagues with whom they work now and have worked in the past powerfully affect what they do there. They provide a vital context for teacher development, what goes on inside the teacher's classroom cannot be divorced from the relations that are forged outside it.

The development of the school culture of action research, review and the sharing of good practice by school teams has made a significant contribution to ensuring progress continues. The work in establishing such a culture is particular and exemplifies the admirable approach to evolution and development rather than working to maintain or sustain current practice and levels of performance. (External Adviser Report, Headteacher Performance Review, January 13th 2005)

Sharing those individual experiences and contexts through the action research has enabled collaborative practices to be developed, braking down the sometimes impenetrable and invisible (and physical) barrier between the classroom practitioner and staff room cynic, opening the door to constructive and supportive professional debate and development. The development of collaborative practices enabled the school to tackle isolated, low quality, low accountability practice leading to collaborative, high quality, high accountability teaching.

Strand 3 – Strategic development

Strategic Plan 1998 - 2001

Strategic planning was essential if the vision for a school was to be realised. Knowing where you want to go is quite different to knowing how to get there. The first strategic development plan for 1998 – 2001 set out the specific targets and aims for the school, but more significantly showed the connection between the targets and the implication these had for practice in the classroom.

“With the previous headteacher the connection between targets and practice was not made clear, but with the CH the connections have always been made explicit. The Governing Body found it quite an eye opener when they were presented with the 1998 – 2001 School Development Plan by the CH; they had not been used to the level of detail it included”. (CG, Semi-structured interview, January 12th 2005)

The inspection report of 2000 also recognised the impact of the 1998 - 2001 strategic plan on the development of the school when they wrote,

“The SDP is good; it is very comprehensive, impacts on departmental planning and is strategic. Targets are clearly identified for improvement and the headteacher has a clear vision and provides educational direction for the school”. (Inspection Report, February 2000, p5)

From the start it was important to give all members of the school community the opportunity to contribute to the development plan. To enable this to happen, a questionnaire was circulated to all staff, parents and members of the Governing Body seeking their views on the school and the priorities they felt were important for its future development in June 1998. A training day, delivered by an external consultant in education, gave training to the Governing Body on the setting of targets and outlining their responsibility in this context. Involving the members of the Governing Body in the construction of the plan ensured their support and gave them an understanding of the specific areas in which the school had to improve. Previously they had not been involved in much discussion concerning the strategic development of the school.

“The school development plan has been written in consultation with staff, parents and governors. In June 1998 all members of the school community received a questionnaire to assess the expectations, strengths and weaknesses of the school. From the returns particular priorities have been identified and these form the framework for the school development plan”. (CH, School Development Plan 1998 – 2001, p1)

The final plan was made available to all members of the school community and the school newsletter used to report regularly on features or priorities signalled in the plan. The priorities included raising standards of achievement, reaching national targets, professional development of staff, development of the sixth form, implementation of the literacy and numeracy policies, improving attendance, implementing a pastoral programme, assessment, reporting and recording, target setting and refurbishment and decoration. Each subject area had been asked to contribute to the plan by completing a school development plan pro-forma that included specific targets (quantitative), success criteria, personnel responsible, resource implications and target dates for implementation and review.

Also included were sections focussed on management, monitoring and evaluation, subject leaders, whole school policies and professional development of staff. In once sense I was not all that concerned with the targets agreed by individual subject areas, I required subject staff to understand the need to strategically plan ahead and to understand some of the technical vocabulary they would need to develop if the school was to move forwards.

“I remember some of your first meetings where we were expected to contribute to the debate by discussing educational issues. The problem was, we just didn’t understand what you were going on about!”. (ST, Semi-structured interview, December 2003.)

Part of the strategic plan, not revealed to staff, was the restructuring that took place in 1999. The purpose of the restructuring was to dismantle the senior management team inherited in 1998, to promote good practitioners to management and leadership positions, to create professional development opportunities and to centralise and tighten the control of monitoring and evaluation and to raise educational standards. The organisational changes were likely to be contentious and therefore I paid particular attention to the introduction at a staff meeting before moving on to describe the changes in the management structure.

“Before moving on to the main agenda items this morning I wish to thank everyone for responding to the demands I have made on them during the last academic year. Having worked for at least seven different headteachers I can empathise with some of the prevailing feelings of uncertainty and insecurity following management change.

Despite a number of difficulties and differences in educational philosophy I can genuinely say that there has been a positive ground swell of change in the school over the past fourteen months. The credit for this must go to you. Whilst I may have been responsible for asking those questions people don't want to answer or didn't want to hear, the implementation of agreed policies and practices has been dependent on the integrity, drive and commitment of you all – and I am grateful for this.

I know there may still be some of you who feel threatened by the changes taking place; who may prefer the status quo. Unfortunately this cannot be since education, like everything else, is in a constant state of flux and change. For the school's growth we need to be flexible and able to adapt rapidly to change. I see it as one of my responsibilities to ensure the school keeps ahead and at the forefront of educational change.

There are a number of reasons for this:

we have a responsibility for ensuring every pupil in our care achieves their true potential;

the market place we operate in is still politically motivated, judgemental and looking for failure;

Foundation status in September signals a new era for the school;

the impending inspection means greater accountability;

safeguarding jobs and the growth of the school are high priorities". (CH, Staff meeting notes, July 7th, 1999, p1)

Having laid the foundations by praising staff for their commitment, drive and patience over the preceding fourteen months I then introduced the management changes that were to be put in place from September 1999. The changes signalled a radical departure from the leadership style up to that point, in the sense that leaders were being put in place and given the delegated responsibility of developing policy and practice in their area of concern. It demonstrated to staff that I trusted and had confidence in their ability to carry out the tasks for which they had been trained – the infrastructure put in place was beginning to bear fruit as the competencies needed to transform the school to a learning culture with a shared vision were coming together.

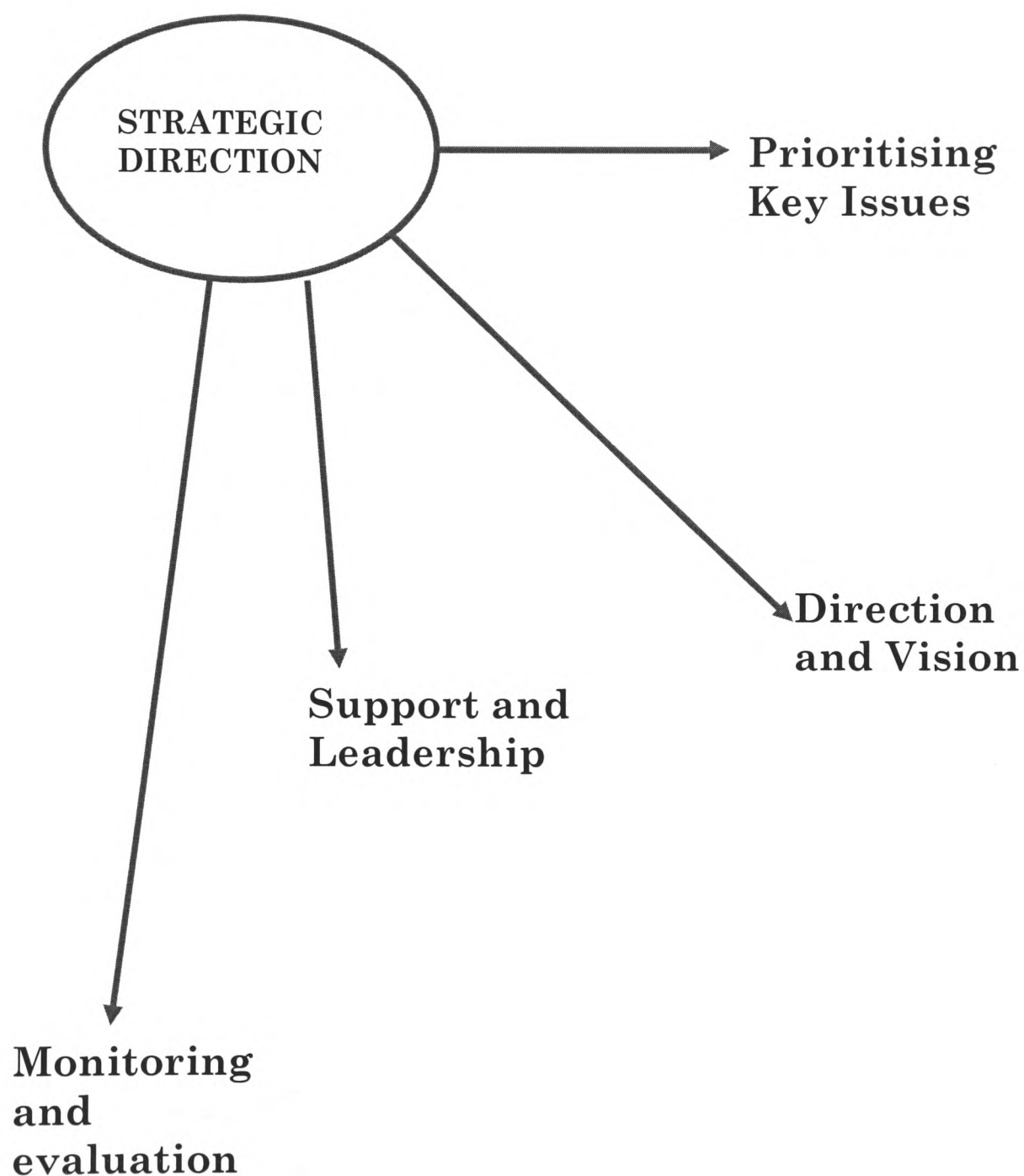
"Renaming the Heads of Department to Subject Leaders was a significant change and associated the role with leadership. Middle managers have been tackled over the last six years through training and Subject Reviews". (SL, Semi-structured interview, 16th January 2006)

"The old SMT (Senior Management Team) was about to be remodelled and the first casualties had been given a bottle of wine on the day that my promotion was announced. In hindsight, these strategic moves were clever and inevitable if the vision was to be achieved". (LG, Semi-structured interview, 4th January 2006)

Under the previous structure there had been a senior management team consisting of head, deputy and two subject leaders. With the new structure there was a leadership group, operational managers, heads of division, monitoring and evaluation group and subject leaders. The leadership group were responsible for the strategic over-view of the school, whereas operational managers, as the name indicates, were responsible for implementing policy. Within each management area there was autonomy, although within job descriptions was the explicit requirement for clear linkages to be made between the overarching vision of the school and leadership of the specific areas.

Represented on the leadership group were continuing professional development, curriculum (including subject specific and pastoral) development, teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluation and assessment. The structure is illustrated on the next few pages.

LEADERSHIP GROUP



LOWER, MIDDLE AND UPPER SCHOOL DIVISIONS

**Self-contained
units within the
school. Each
with Head and
assistant**

**Responsible for
the Pastoral and
Academic
welfare of all
pupils within the
division**

**Annual targets set by
Heads of each division for:**

**Attendance
Pupil progress
Academic achievement
Quality of teaching
Attendance at Parents
evenings
Quality of reports
Form Tutor targets
Report reply slips
Personal Organiser use
Lateness to school**

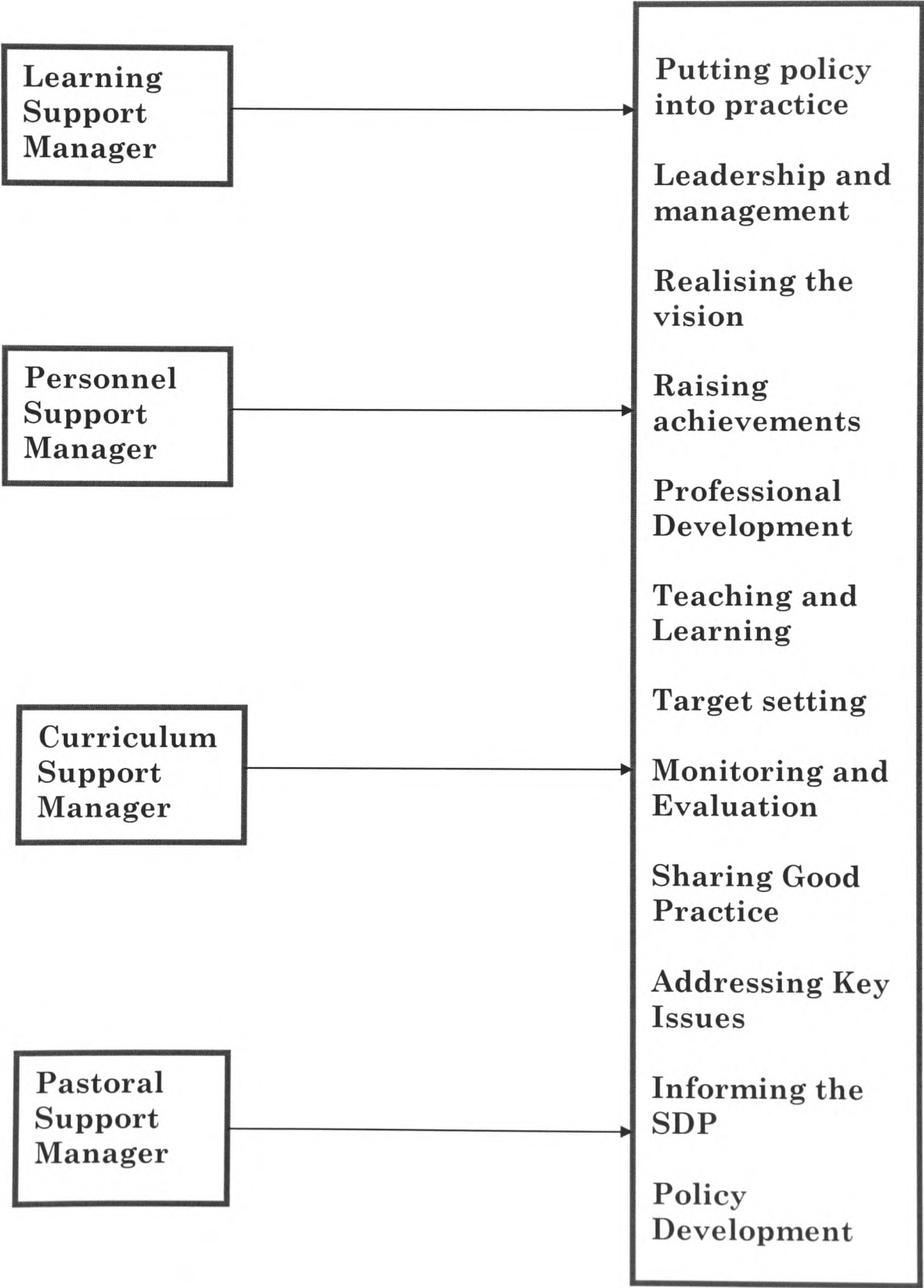
**Linked to key issues and
School Development Plan**

**Annual Divisional
Review carried
out by Leadership
Group together
with Head of
Division**

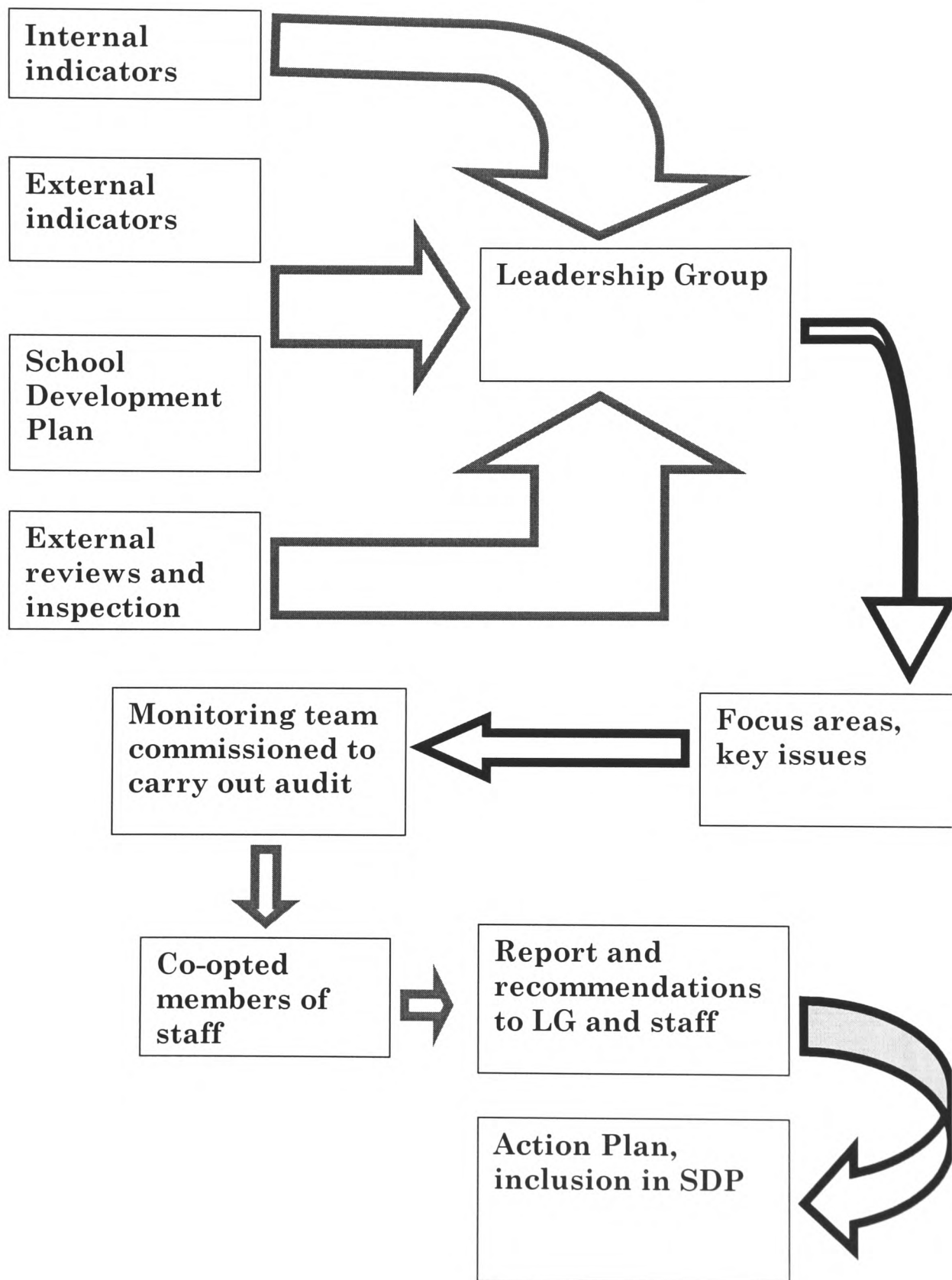
**Responsible for
establishing
corporate identity
in keeping with
whole school ethos
and culture**

**Authority to
monitor and
evaluate delegated
to Heads of
Division by
Headmaster**

OPERATIONAL MANAGERS



ROLE OF THE MONITORING TEAM



The monitoring team was particularly useful for developing a number of staff because of the nature of its composition. The leadership group would commission the monitoring team to carry out audits of various areas of the school which could co-opt members to the team for specific purposes. Over a period of time all staff have been involved in investigating various aspects of school life; the particular strengths of staff have been utilised, and weaknesses addressed by placing nominated individuals with teams having specific strengths and range of experience. It has been especially useful for inculcating new members of staff into the ethos and culture of the school whilst at the same time affording effective professional training opportunities.

Legitimacy was accorded the monitoring team through being invited by the leadership group to present their findings and recommendations to full staff meetings and although the leadership group usually saw draft reports in advance, they remained in ownership of the monitoring team that had produced them. Action plans produced by the group were incorporated into the school development plan and under the auspices of the annual subject reviews monitored to determine the effectiveness of them in changing practice. Subject reviews were the first foray into developing reflective practices in the school as it moved towards a learning culture.

“Compared to previously staff have an upbeat attitude to learning in the school; they are excited by learning and can play an active role in the school; people fight to say things in INSET, believe in what we can do and have a shared vision for the school”. (HY, Semi-structured interview, December 4th 2003)

Strategic Plan 2002 - 2005

The way in which the Strategic Plan 2002 – 2005 was constructed differed considerably from the way the 1998 – 2001 was, to reflect the increased understanding and competences of staff through the instructional professional development training

that had taken place between 1998 and 2002. Additionally, because of the growing numbers in the school, there had been an influx of new staff, the majority of whom were experienced and knowledgeable about the wider issues concerning school development.

The starting point for constructing the plan was to involve the whole staff, including the non-teaching staff, in determining through various meetings, their vision for the school by 2005. From the various contributions to the debate an agreed set of objectives was determined and the Vision 2005 statement produced which included the following aims:

- 100% of teaching good or better
- Standards of achievement good or very good in all classes
- 80% achieving the core indicator at key stage 3
- 75% 5A* - C at GCSE
- Sixth form of 175
- New accommodation
- 1000 pupils in the school
- Caring community
- One of the best performing schools in Wales

Implicit in the vision statements were high expectations reflecting the changed culture and ethos of the school since 1998 where low expectations had been the norm. Translating the vision into practice required the statements to be unpacked and related to working practices; achieved by taking each one and identifying the overarching strategy that would need to be developed to meet specific aims and objectives. Subject leaders were provided with a standard pro-forma in which they identified the vision statement

they were addressing together with its reference number. For example, the statement, 80% achieving the core indicator at Key Stage 3 (reference 1), had implications for the achievement of boys relative to girls (reference 1.1), which in turn could be addressed by changing schemes of work to encompass competitive activities that specifically appeal to boys, references 1.1.8, 1.1.14 and 1.1.15.

Subject areas were asked through their development plan to tackle each of the vision statements and choose which of the sub-group tasks they hoped to address in the years 2003, 2004 and 2005. There was no requirement to cover all sub-tasks since each subject area were at different stages of development. For each task, success criteria, named personnel responsible, time scale and resource implications were provided. Subject areas were given a month to complete the task and discs containing final versions of subject plans were collated to construct the school development plan. Providing a pro-forma on disc ensured that there was a consistency between subject areas, all staff had ownership of the final plan and everyone was playing from the same hymn sheet. All staff, including teaching and non-teaching was included in the development process with specific training being given to each particular group. A Power-Point presentation that started with the vision statements and unfolded to display the implications for practice was shown to all staff and the governing body – the deconstruction of one of the objectives is illustrated over the next few pages.

Strategic Plan 2002 – 2005

Vision Statement	Overarching strategies	Impact on practice
1. 80% achieving the core indicator at KS3	1.1 Addressing the difference between boys and girls in the core subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1.1 Seating arrangements 1.1.2 Segregated teaching of boys and girls 1.1.3 Activity days increased in Y7 – 9 1.1.4 Monthly review and action planning 1.1.5 Reward system focused on positive achievement 1.1.6 Reintroducing 'bring a parent to school' day 1.1.7 Greater responsibility of the form tutor 1.1.8 More proactive lessons for boys 1.1.9 Range of strategies in lessons 1.1.10 Making sure bottom groups are evenly mixed 1.1.11 Use of role models and PSHE 1.1.12 KS3 newsletter, run by pupils 1.1.13 laddish culture challenged 1.1.14 competitive edge to appeal to boys 1.1.15 material developed that appeals to boys 1.1.16 increased areas of responsibility in the school
	1.2 Thinking and problem solving skills developed from Y7 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.2.1 More open ended questions used in class 1.2.2 Fewer 'yes' or 'no' questions, or 50-50 situations that require guesswork rather than understanding 1.2.3 Give time for the pupil to respond, research indicates 3-5 seconds is effective

- 1.2.4 Reasoned answers to be encouraged
- 1.2.5 Don't be happy with no response
- 1.2.6 Differentiate and target the questions
- 1.2.7 Include possible questions in lesson plans
- 1.2.8 Great egg race type competitions organised
- 1.2.9 Potential for developing problem solving skills
- 1.2.10 Competitive and therefore appealing to younger pupils
- 1.2.11 Opportunity for sixth form to organise a club or competition
- 1.2.12 Incorporate in the Eistedfodd competition
- 1.2.13 Possible to include in all curriculum areas and ideal for cross-curricular links
- 1.2.14 Ideal for enrichment days
- 1.2.15 Make lessons more motivational and appealing

1.3 Challenging homework assignments that lead a pupil through a structured argument

- 1.3.1 Solving riddles
- 1.3.2 Data analysis
- 1.3.3 Comprehension
- 1.3.4 Précising skills
- 1.3.5 Structured questions
- 1.3.6 Problem solving
- 1.3.7 Multiple completion exercises
- 1.3.8 Guided research tasks
- 1.3.9 Increased opportunity to debate in class
- 1.3.10 'CASE' in maths and science
- 1.3.11 Refusing to accept 'I don't know' culture
- 1.3.12 1Short, sharp quizzes every lesson
- 1.3.13 Increased opportunity for extended prose
- 1.3.14 Reading challenges
- 1.3.15 Solving crosswords
- 1.3.16 Thinking days
- 1.3.17 'Mensa' type challenges for homeworks

1.4 Mentoring for

pupils perceived as underachieving

- 1.4.1 Use of 'buddy' system with older pupils in Y10 – 13
- 1.4.2 Form tutors identify mentoring group each half term
- 1.4.3 Individual interviews with Heads of Division each half term
- 1.4.4 Reports of progress sent to parents on a regular basis

1.5 Tackling the 'slump' in Y8

- 1.5.1 Establishing the right culture from Y7 onwards
- 1.5.2 Effective links with partnership primary schools

1.5.3 High expectations on attendance, uniform, homework and standards of work

1.5.4 Effective parental links expected

- Curriculum links
- Taster lessons
- Competitions
- Open days
- Invitations to school performances
- Games coaching
- Joint musical performances
- Regular newsletter to Y6 pupils
- Y7 links with Y6 pupils via e-mail
- The quality of assessment tasks
- The quality of marking and feedback
- Quality of lessons taught
- The grades expected in examinations
- Level of attendance expected
- Through newsletter column
- Social events
- Performing arts evening
- 'Bring a parent to school' day
- early reader scheme
- lower school magazine
- parental interviews
- invitations to attend awards in assemblies
- encourage to join PTA & parents council
- Performing arts evening in October
- Contribution to prize giving
- Y7 social evening in November
- Saturday ramble

1.5.5 Early involvement in the life of the school

1.5.6 Off-curriculum activity days

- Christmas party and disco
- Y7 fund raiser in January
- Theme days organised within departments
- Fun days organised by pastoral team
- Challenging days organised by PE department
- Trips organised by form tutors

1.5.7 Forms linked with sixth form mentor

- Y8 fund raising day
- Study and learning skills day
- Sixth former takes responsibility for integrating pupils
- Supports pupils with academic work

1.5.8 Praise culture a high priority

- Role model that pupils can aspire to
- Arrange extra-curricular activities for the form
- Becomes a friend to each member of the form
- High profile in assemblies
- Positive feedback in books
- Comments in the Personal Organiser
- Effective use of the merit shop
- Letters of commendation sent home
- Special concessions
- Reward through responsibility
- Maximise pupils strengths
- Set achievable targets

1.5.9 Induction days prior to joining in September

1.5.10 More dynamic and interactive classrooms

- Paired and group work
- Debating
- Leading the class
- Practical skills
- Educational games
- Problem solving
- Peer evaluation
- Quizzes
- Feedback sessions
- Use of ICT in class
- Varied strategies
- Challenging tasks
- Fun activities
- Drama
- Pupil displays
- Buddy system for Y7 pupils
- Form monitors

1.5.11 Development of areas of responsibility for pupils in Y8

- Club organisers
- Subject monitors
- Lab. Assistants
- Library helpers
- Homework monitors
- Classroom displays
- Lower school captains
- Litter monitors
- Lower school notice board
- Pupil council
- Assemblies
- Memorial garden
- Pastoral help
- Magazine editor
- Sports teams
- Subject clubs
- Gardening club
- Lower school choir
- Quiz nights
- Magazine production
- Cooking club
- Outdoor activities
- Film club
- Inter-house events
- Saturday club
- School trips
- Science club
- Debating society
- Litter collection
- Study skills reinforced through PSHE
- Revision techniques in all subject areas
- Research topics
- Class debates
- Using the LRC effectively
- Interrogating the web
- Learning strategies taught in all classes

1.5.12 Additional extra-curricular activities targeted at Y8

1.5.13 Independent learning skills taught as part of all classes from Y7

1.6 Improved literacy and numeracy skills

1.6.1 all subject areas to have literacy and numeracy

policies linked to school policies

1.6.2 assignments to include opportunities to practice key skills

1.6.3 extended writing

1.6.4 problem solving

1.6.5 oral responses

1.6.6 technical language

1.6.7 data analysis

1.6.9 debating opportunities

1.6.10 comprehension

1.6.11 writing frames

1.7 Common

approach between

KS3 coordinators

1.7.1 Joint meetings between KS3 coordinators to

agree policy on common aspects

1.7.2 Numeracy

1.7.3 Literacy

1.7.4 Presentation of work

1.7.5 Homework coordination

1.7.6 Thematic approach developed

1.7.7 Decide on particular focuses for each half term

1.8.1 lower school divisional newsletter

1.8 Increased

home-school

contact

1.8.2 letter each month to 'good' and 'poor'

1.8.3 first day call for absence

1.8.4 'Bring a parent to school' day

1.8.5 increased information on the web

1.8.6 meet the teacher' social

1.8.7 parents invited to half termly presentations

1.8.8 joint social evenings for parents and pupils

1.8.9 invite comments from parents

The construction of the 2002 – 2005 development plan represented a significant change in direction to the previous plan. The policies and frameworks put in place in 1998 had served the purpose of raising standards to a particular level and to raise standards further a deeper analysis and greater understanding of the teaching and learning processes needed to be incorporated and addressed within the new framework. The strategies put in place in 1998 would at best maintain the status quo or at worse see standards slip below the peak they had achieved in the period 1998 – 2001. In a sense the purpose of the 2002 – 2005 plan was to shift the school into a higher gear, avoiding the comfort zone that leads to complacency and underachievement and raising the stakes to a higher plane of expectation. The staff, of course, had experienced a strategic change of direction in 1998 when new strategies had been put in place to address the underachievement at that time. To a certain extent they were strategies that only scratched the surface of educational understanding and were limited by the level of knowledge and range of skills and competences of the staff.

The basic framework, on which further developments could be built, had been put in place in the period 1998 – 2001. The infra-structure had been firmed up, staff competences addressed and reflective practices developed – the culture of the school had become a learning culture, where teaching staff, equipped with the necessary skills and competences, could play a more proactive role in planning and delivering the learning process.

Private and public strategic intent and planning

As I have demonstrated, the strategic planning for the case study school in the period 2002 – 2005, identified key priorities, was linked to improvements in pupil attainments and put in place specific strategies to enable advances to be made. The strategic

development plans, in order that it had impact and empowered staff, was placed in the public domain. Available for inspection by staff, pupils, parents and governors and through this availability ensuring a degree of accountability to the school's principle stake holders and a valuable reference point for the various leaders in the school. Through the questionnaire-based survey, it was possible to gauge the perceptions of the teaching staff to the strategic thinking and strategic planning underpinning the school's development, the results are shown in Figure 19.

	Rating	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Question								
Takes a strategic overview of the development of the school		78.3%	13.0%	8.7%				
Cumulative percentage		78.3%	91.3%	100%				
Thinks 'outside the box' to anticipate and plan for the future		34.8%	34.8%	17.4%	13.0%			
Cumulative percentage		34.8%	69.6%	87.0%	100%			
Is decisive and strategic		73.9%	8.7%	8.7%	8.7%			
Cumulative percentage		73.9%	82.6%	91.3%	100%			
Thinks and acts ahead of time		39.1%	34.8%	21.7%	4.3%			
Cumulative percentage		39.1%	73.9%	95.7%	100%			
Makes clear, logical plans when structuring programmes of work		34.8%	34.8%	21.7%	8.7%			
Cumulative percentage		34.8%	69.6%	91.3%	100%			

Figure 19 Participants' perceptions about strategic planning.

(Rating A = very strongly agree, G = Very strongly disagree. Total responses to questions shown N = 115)

The explicitly stated and publicly available strategic plan is only part of the strategic planning process since there are those strategic plans not necessarily in the public domain, or shared internally with staff, but held privately and internalised by the headteacher. These are the private thoughts and aspirations of the headteacher that if placed in the public domain would, because of their nature, create tensions and ambiguities within the culture of the school. Discussions with other headteachers provide anecdotal evidence to suggest this is not an uncommon occurrence but nevertheless

informs actions and strategies. They are part of a hidden agenda driven by personal beliefs and convictions, which by their nature would be contentious if they were made public. I suggest that for most transforming leaders there will coexist both public and private strategic development plans linked by common threads and geared to the specific aims of the school and underpinned by the value systems of individual headteachers.

For example, in the case study school, the publicised strategic plan highlights strategies for raising pupil performance so that the aim of achieving 80% in the core indicator at Key Stage 3 is met. The development plan identifies strategies that could be put in place to address this issue (see pages 148 - 153) but what is not shared with the school community is the private strategic plan also linked to this objective and highlighted below.

Overall aim: 80% achieving the core indicator at Key Stage 3

Publicised Strategic Plan	Private Strategic Plan
1.1 Addressing the difference between boys and girls performance in the core subjects	Specific target for recruitment of male members of staff as role models. Deliberate policy of promotional opportunities for male staff exemplifying good practice, high expectations and empathy with the aims and objectives of the school.
1.2 Thinking and problem solving skills developed from Y7 onwards.	Specific recruitment of staff displaying high levels of intelligence through good degrees at top class universities. Create promotional opportunities for those staff demonstrating through teaching their understanding of thinking and problem solving skills.
1.3 Challenging homework assignments	Annual subject review to target those staff consistently failing to apply the homework policy and the expectations explicitly stated in it. Where necessary apply sanctions to staff failing to comply and

	instigate competency procedures if necessary.
1.4 Mentoring underachieving pupils	Audit possible causes of boys' underachievement particularly in teaching groups where there may be a connection between the quality of teaching and the attitude of boys to the teacher.
1.5 Tackling the 'slump' in Y8	Ensure curriculum timetable locates motivational teachers to year 8 teaching groups.
1.6 Improved literacy and numeracy skills	Sidetrack current literacy coordinator through restructuring. Use Basic Skills Award scheme as an opportunity to put in place basic skills manager with oversight of literacy and other basic skills. Advertise internally, but do not appoint current literacy coordinator to the post.
1.7 Common approach to KS3 coordinators	Produce KS3 coordinators policy document in which specific requirements are detailed – use audit trails to ensure compliance and application.
1.8 Increased home – school contacts	Limit home – school contacts to personnel who have good working relations with parents and supportive of the school and its aims and objectives. Achieved through specific guidelines issued to all staff.

Examination of the publicised and the private strategic plan show marked differences although linked by the common thread of raising standards of performance at Key Stage

3. The private strategic plan is almost wholly related to the performance of teaching staff and more particularly the underperformance in a number of key areas and politically sensitive.

“CH has changed the management structure of the school and removed some of the SMT members who had influence. He has replaced the ‘dead wood’ with visionary staff and tightened assessment procedures. He has changed from the autocratic style as he has the confidence to delegate to his team. He has bribed his enemies and got them on side. He is clever and strategic”. (LG, Semi-structured interview, 16th January 2006)

Strand 4 – Distributed leadership, sustaining achievements

Introduction

A de-skilled work force is unable to be empowered since they lack the necessary skills and knowledge to take ownership of their areas of influence and control. Of necessity therefore, was the need to professionally develop the staff through capacity development; consequently developing staff competencies was high on the agenda during the first two years of headship in the case study school.

“The application of his chosen methodologies, including competency development and distributed leadership, has been outstandingly successful in both sustaining and improving performance”. (School Inspection Report, 2006, p30)

Developing leadership competencies

Having, through the strategies previously discussed increased the levels of competency of the leadership team they in turn were able to share with middle managers, the principles of leadership and management through specific training activities. Over time this ensured that all members of staff shared the vision of the school and became owners of it. The principle vehicle for this competency development was through continuing professional development in the form of internal and external training, sharply focussed on leadership and management.

The extent to which empowerment could be exercised was proportional to the level of staff competency, the greater levels of competency the greater ownership and empowerment of staff. Translating in practice through staff being able to lead teams and demonstrating an understanding and empathy with the vision of the school and enabling changes in practice to occur. Concurrent with empowering the staff was the evolution of the leadership style to reflect the changes occurring within the culture of the school and the staff in particular. Transforming leadership is fluid and dynamic reflecting the

changes taking place and responding to the increased leadership competency of the staff in the school. The empowerment of staff also empowers the leadership to take time to reflect, take risks and strategically determine the next stage of the school's development – empowerment is a liberating process occasioned through transforming practices.

The headteacher is an extremely successful leader and manager, whose belief in the effectiveness of transformational leadership has been fully justified in the improvements that have occurred over time in the school".
(School Inspection Report, 2006, p30)

Strands 1, 2 and 3 were primarily concerned with putting in place the infrastructure of policies and procedures, exemplifying the vision in practice and engaging teaching staff in continuing professional development and through these strategies enabled reflective and collaborative practices to be developed. Over a two-year period the foundations for shared and distributed leadership practices were established and through this increased autonomy and ownership of the change process could be transferred to a wider circle of teaching staff. The introduction of operational managers and the monitoring team was part of this process; it served the purpose of devolving power in the school whilst at the same time acknowledging the trust the leadership team had in the increased competency levels of the teaching staff as a result of the continuous professional training programme that had been put in place. It was realised that continued support for the change process could not be sustained unless teachers were trusted to exercise leadership responsibilities without reference to the headteacher; although the monitoring and evaluation procedures ensured accountability for outcomes as a result of leader's actions. Empowerment does not mean the personal abrogation of accountability and responsibility.

The Strategic Plan 2002 – 2005, as has been previously explained, was developed by all teaching staff, rather than imposed top-down, representing a radical departure from the construction of the 1998 – 2001 strategic plan, which largely reflected the priorities of

the headteacher and was entirely constructed by him. Similarly, the transition from the positional leadership led annual subject review, to subject leaders' ownership of the construction of the report, is a reflection of the effective development of leadership within the school and the shift in the locus of power from top-down to bottom-up. Over the period 1998 – 2003 there is evidence that shows teachers have become empowered and leadership distributed and shared. Evidence for this can be gleaned from the observations made about leadership and management in the inspection report 2006.

"Leaders and managers at all levels have been outstandingly successful in providing a clear direction for the school insofar as:

- *virtually every member of staff shares a belief that the school is going to continue to improve in all aspects of provision;*
- *there is a shared determination to see the vision realised in increasing levels of standards of achievement, and*
- *subject leaders have been successful in changing the culture and ethos of the school for the better". (School Inspection Report, 2006, p30)*

Avoiding complacency

Where schools have improved performance there is a danger of becoming complacent and unless appropriate steps are put in place, finding that over time improvements achieved become increasingly difficult to sustain. To sustain and continue to improve on performance it was necessary to make strategic changes that allowed for the future long-term development of the school. Whilst Strands 1 – 3 had been concerned with raising professional competencies of staff and empowerment to enable improvements from a low performance base, the next stage of development required a further change in culture and educational paradigm to accelerate the improvements in performance to a higher plateau.

Since 2002 substantial emphasis has been placed on action research taking place in the school, the purpose being to encourage teaching staff to reflect on practice, to work

collaboratively, to develop teams and to assist with professional development through formulating solutions to a variety of school based problems. In 2003 the school, under the direction of one of the deputy heads, instigated the Learning Forum as a platform for sharing research findings and formulating research projects. Triggered by the successful completion of work by the leadership group on a project entitled 'Towards effective teaching' where video evidence of effective practice and training materials produced for teaching staff to use in the context of their subject areas, or for private consumption. Recent action research topics have included analysing pupil performance data to determine whether the socio-economic background of a pupil affects performance, how extra-curricular activities help motivate pupils to learn and in 2003 a project looking at disaffected boys in Year 11 was started and will be concluded in June 2004 when the paper will be presented to the teaching staff, together with any recommendations for action from the research team.

"It is worth noting that the outcomes of teachers' action research are used not only within the school, but are used by other schools as training resources. A particularly good product is the one that addresses the issue of motivating disaffected Y11 boys". (School Inspection Report, 2006, p31)

Through the action research initiative, distributive leadership skills have been developed and collaborative practices been encouraged. Opportunities to belong to a research team are open to all members of staff, whether experienced or inexperienced, and the group nominate the chair of the working party and determine the methodology used in the research; research questions are usually suggested by interested staff to the learning forum coordinator.

The outcomes of the research are made available in the staff research library (established in 2003) and presented at twilight sessions for staff INSET. The high profile afforded the research team in the public venue of a staff INSET session sends a clear message about

how the leadership group perceive the professional standing of the staff involved. It is through the public acknowledgement of the work that has been achieved that trust and ownership is encouraged through the school. The ripple effect of this has been quite tangible through increased interest in developing action research questions and considerable numbers of staff volunteering to belong to the various research groups and a small number embarking on externally organised higher education courses related to their own professional development. There is additional evidence, through the annual subject reviews (previously mentioned), of impact on classroom practice.

The clearer understanding of the issues underpinning the various problems identified has enabled teaching staff to reflect in a constructive way about their own practice and to implement changes to practice where they perceive the need to do so; they have been empowered through the increased knowledge base and competency levels honed through the action research processes. In a sense the school is developing a professional learning community where not only pupils are learning but teaching staff are as well. The action research projects have created dynamism and enthusiasm for teaching and learning in the school, which it is hoped will lead ultimately to increased levels of performance and sustained achievements.

“The school’s systems for promoting the continuing professional development of all staff and for improving the quality of provision are good with outstanding features. Aspects include:

- *in-depth action research undertaken by subject leaders that has led to improvements in many aspects of school life;*
- *extremely rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating standards and many other areas of provision;*
- *all teaching being monitored and evaluated at regular intervals to determine current performance and future training needs;*
- *mentoring of all staff via professional development interviews, and*

- *exemplary mentoring of trainee teachers*". (School Inspection Report, 2006, p31)

In addition to the Learning Forum, as the school has grown in size opportunities for developing further posts of responsibility have been created and through targeted professional development opportunities teachers have been able to take on a variety of leadership roles within the school. In 1998 the same opportunities did not exist, firstly because staff competencies were not fully developed and secondly the parlous state of the school's finances legislated against further expenditure both in terms of professional development opportunities and posts of responsibility. There has been considerable scope for leadership development within the school's pastoral framework as pupil numbers has increased and this has enabled bottle-necks within departments to be bypassed by offering alternative routes to leadership and management responsibilities, especially where the sitting tenant in a subject area is unlikely to move in the immediate future thereby limiting professional development opportunities for other members of staff teaching within that curriculum area.

Sustaining achievements is also about maintaining a culture of mutual support, giving positive praise and encouragement and celebrating success. Teachers are unlikely to commit themselves beyond that which is contractually required if their efforts go unnoticed and unacknowledged. It has been a deliberate policy, as the school achieves success, to celebrate through small tokens of gratitude in the form of bottles of wine to teaching and non-teaching staff, or the annual Christmas meal, turning a blind eye to those who need a few extra days at home to complete a particular task or finishing early on the last day of term.

Through careful use of twilight sessions, that is after school training times, it has been possible to finish terms two or three days earlier than other schools in the area. By displaying gratitude for a job well done through these simple acts, that relative to the whole school budget represent insignificant costs, goodwill has been fostered and staff have in return displayed a willingness to take on new challenges and demonstrated an increased positive commitment to the school. Compared with the early days in 1998, the interpersonal relationships within the school are more fully developed and supportive of each other; perhaps a reflection of the changing leadership role I have adapted as the contextual climate of the school has changed and grown.

Transforming schools is not, of course, just about changing the social and cultural context of the school, or changing the expectations and improving student outcomes, it also involves the physical environment of the school as well. Although in 1998 there were no funds for development of the environment, increased pupil numbers, themselves driven by improved school performance, has increased the budget available from just under £800 000 in 1998 to £2.8M in 2004 and despite the increased staffing costs, has left sufficient funds for investment in the physical environment of the school. The impact of these changes should not be underestimated and yet play virtually no part within educational literature or research, contributing much to staff morale.

The case study school is typical of many built in the early sixties, from cheap material, poorly designed and showing signs of its age; cold in winter, too hot in summer and cramped, with unappealing facades that suggest inhumane and depersonalised interiors. Fortunately the school has in recent years been in a position to invest heavily in the building, providing a new dining room, classrooms and sixth form centre and in 2004 the planned building of an eight classroom block. There is a clear message being conveyed

to staff and the stakeholders of the school through these developments; the school is successful, cares about the physical environment and is making progress. These, together with the other identified developments, contribute and it is hoped will continue to contribute to sustaining the schools achievements.

“The developments planned for the school indicate clearly that the school is not complacent about its current success, but that it seeks to achieve even higher standards”. (School Inspection Report, 2006, p35)

The Micro-politics of Change

Introduction

In the previous sections I have outlined four strands of development that were perceived as being significant factors contributing to the improved performance of the case study school during the period 1998 – 2004. The analysis has been supported through reference to archive and contemporaneous documentation, supplemented by a range of participant voices through the semi-structured interviews and questionnaire-based survey. The leadership and management of change during the period this research is concerned with, was not without conflict or power struggles. The purpose of this section is to report on three specific cases of resistance to change engineered by various micro-political groups within the school.

The first case looks at the power and influence of the financial manager at the school, the second the actions of a rogue governor and the last the way in which the micro-political group of three subject leaders responded to challenges to working practices.

Power and influence of the financial manager

It was a much more difficult task transforming the non-teaching staff than the teaching staff. In the early days of my headship, through effective micro-political power bases

established during the preceding seven years, there was an entrenched culture of self-protection and hostility towards teaching staff. My leadership was viewed with some caution and perceived as a threat to established working practices, especially in the finance and general office. Initial attempts to nurture open dialogue and frank discussions failed, working practices continued as they had been and the financial manager of the school presented a particular challenge to my leadership, even though I had legitimate authority over all areas of the school and therefore ultimate responsibility for the financial management of the school. The situation was compounded by the intense loyalty (and sometimes fear) of the general office and financial staff to the financial manager who had successfully drawn into their network a number of the senior staff on the SMT at that time.

The rather autocratic approach I exercised in the early part of my tenure had only served to alienate senior staff on the SMT and strengthened to a certain extent the micro-political group centred on the general and finance office. There was no doubt in my mind that the finance manager was a very astute bully capable of manipulating personnel in order to protect the office personnel power base. This is born out by some of the responses elicited during the semi-structured interviews when discussing the role of the financial manager in the school at that time.

"Teachers I believe were scared of them, they had to go cap in hand to get anything. You had to be deferential. I felt nervy about discussing anything controversial with them". (SS, Semi-structured interview, December 14th 2005)

"The financial manager was a very powerful character – manner, clothing, way of dealing with you, loud – no room for disagreement, quite manipulative, controlled others." (SS, Semi-structured interview, December 15th 2005)

"They (financial manager) used power; managed to get into the position where they were almost running the school; they made themselves indispensable by keeping everything important to themselves, so no-one else could do the job." (LG, Semi-structured interview, December 15th 2005)

"A nasty piece of work if on the wrong side of them. Repeatedly ripped into me, quite virulent when I had crossed the line – this caused me to see them in a different light – Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde – a dangerous person – would always save something for emergencies – a terrible manner with some people". (SS, Semi-structured interview, December 13th 2005)

"Incredibly powerful position; it happened if they said 'yes' and not if they said 'no'. Most staff were frightened by them." (SS, Semi-structured interview, December 13th 2005)

The power base and sphere of influence of the financial manager was substantial and had been developed since 1991 when he/she were first appointed to the school. The financial manager was influential for a number of reasons. As clerk to the governing body he/she could influence the workings of the governors of the school, as finance manager they held control over the major resources in the school and as manager of the support staff and a member of the senior management team they were perceived as number two in the school.

"The financial manager seemed to run the place and next in line to the throne. They made decisions that affected achievements of the school. There was an unhealthy allegiance between the financial manager and the headteacher". (LG, Semi-structured interview, November 13th 2003, reflecting on the period pre-1998)

No decisions concerning staff appointments, financial matters or working conditions were likely to be sanctioned without the agreement of the financial manager. Combined with the lack of understanding of teaching and learning, this contributed to the unsatisfactory performance of the school both educationally and financially. The financial manager had ensured support for their power base by befriending a close group of influential people within the school – including teaching staff, administrative staff, headteacher at the time and members of the governing body, notably the Chair of the Governing Body. In this way they were able to keep a finger on the pulse and keep tabs

on what was happening in the school and through effective networking ensured that proposals that did not meet their approval were unlikely to be accepted.

“No staff development took place other than through grace and favour of the financial manager”. (SL, Semi-structured interview, November 13th 2003)

Symptomatic of the power base they had created was the reserved car parking space in front of the school that indicated it was for the financial managers use only. Indeed, when the lead inspector arrived for his preliminary visit in January 2000, he pointedly commented, ‘I can see whose in charge of the school then’.

A number of strategies were used to correct the locus of power in the school when I took up appointment in 1998 and to resolve the unhealthy intrusion of the financial manager into the management of the school. The first involved relocating the financial manager’s office from the central administrative area of the school and establishing the heads office in the vacated room. Firstly, this signalled to the teaching and non-teaching staff that ultimate power rested with the headteacher and, secondly it removed the financial manager from what had been a centre of political activity in the school. The move was designed to limit the immediate sphere of influence of the financial manager – it became less straightforward for teaching and non-teaching staff to drop by for a quick chat and conference.

The second decision was to remove the financial manager from the SMT (Senior Management Team) since I argued their experience did not serve the purpose of the group from an educational point of view. As a compromise I agreed to see the financial manager on a formal basis once a week. The strategies were put in place on the first day of appointment and immediately began to reduce the power base and sphere of influence that had been allowed to flourish over the preceding seven years. In discussing the

influence of the financial manager pre-1998, there was no ambiguity about the power they held within the school:

“The head had been waylaid by the politics of being a grant maintained school and unfortunately the financial manager stepped into the vacuum produced. It suited both the head and the financial manager and as a result the manager’s power base was allowed to flourish and become all embracing and influential”.
(LG, Semi-structured interview, November 11th 2003)

The relationship between the financial manager and the Chair of the Governors was much more difficult to manage. The financial manager and Chair of the Governing Body had been friends since 1991, when the school became Grant Maintained. Over the years, the Chair of Governors had relied heavily on the financial manager for information concerning the day-to-day workings of the school and had become an indispensable support for the Chair of Governors.

Matters came to a head in June 1998 when I discovered on checking the accounts for the previous year some anomalies with the income and expenditure balances. They showed that £20000 had been added to one column to compensate for a mathematical error that had occurred earlier in the year, undetected by the financial manager. The amount had been added in order to balance the figures. Rather than accept the error the financial manager attempted to justify the action they had taken and as a consequence in June 1998 I tabled a motion of no confidence in the financial manager at a governing body meeting.

“Further investigation revealed errors in the financial manager’s figures to the sum of £20 000 which by the end of year figures had been corrected”. (Minutes of extraordinary meeting of the Governing Body, September 9th, 1998)

The governing body meeting concluded that the financial manager had been culpable of gross incompetence and that the governing body should discontinue their employment.

The financial manager's actions were partly mitigated by the fact that the governing body had also made mistakes and had not kept a close eye on the work of the financial manager, which would have left them vulnerable to accusations of incompetence by the unions and undermined their argument for dismissal.

"The Finance Committee were asked why they had not acted sooner if they had had cause for concern. They were told that the PH had threatened his resignation and considering the predecessor's departure together with the political climate at the time they felt their hands were tied". (Minutes of extraordinary meeting of the Governing Body, September 9th, 1998)

The outcome of the inquiry was that stage 1 of the disciplinary procedures was instigated and the financial manager given a formal warning and an action plan agreed for further training and specific objectives to be achieved within a specific period of time. Whilst the events had served as a wake up call for the governing body it only momentarily dented the activities of the financial manager. It did however raise the awareness of the governing body to some of the unprofessional practices of the financial manager, thereby undermining their trust in them and increasing their confidence in my abilities as headteacher. Having the trust of the governing body was important since the financial manager had sought to undermine my authority with the Governing Body since appointment through allies on the board. Evidence for this comes from an e-mail sent by the bursar to a relative not long after I arrived at the school. In the e-mail, the financial manager expressed displeasure at the way in which I questioned financial decisions and intimated to the recipient that they disliked me intensely. The feelings of distrust and dislike for the financial manager are evidenced in the transcript taken during the semi-structured interviews with members of the leadership group.

"As time passed, it became clear that the school was going somewhere. We had to remove any of the people who were simply there for the glory and not the

'hard graft'. The school was transformed and we had a successful inspection. However, there was a shadow lurking in the background. The financial manager was shading the light of success. I never trusted them as they oozed evil from every pore and would stomp around the corridors with their fat ankles. They were the only member of staff with a labelled parking space and this was a symbol of the power that PH had given to them. Any sensitive human being could sense that they were not trustworthy and was trying to operate their own kingdom from their office; an office that was like a skip. The mess in the room was a sign that they were inefficient and disorganised. No one liked them but everyone had to play along with their petty games. However, CH investigated the lair and unearthed some financial corruption. He removed this dangerous individual from the school but this unearthed another monster in the form of a governor". (LG, Semi-structured interview, February 6th 2006)

By September 2000 the situation was to change again. Following a claim by a member of staff on the school's insurance policy it was discovered that the school had not met the statutory obligation of having public liability insurance in place. The financial manager had failed to renew the policy in August 2000, taking the gamble that no claims would be forthcoming and to help with the cash flow situation of the school. In an attempt to cover up the negligence, the financial manager tried unsuccessfully to back date the policy when it became clear a claim was being made. The insurance company confidentially informed the headteacher in December 2000 of what was happening. On being informed, I immediately contacted the Chair of Governors requesting the financial manager be immediately suspended on the grounds of gross misconduct. The discipline committee sanctioned this and in January 2001 the financial manager was suspended pending an inquiry. By March 2001 an agreement had been reached with the financial manager through negotiations between the union and the governing body. The financial manager's employment contract with the school was terminated.

"Following negotiations between the Personnel Committee of the Governing Body and the union representative it has been agreed that the financial manager will take voluntary redundancy with effect from March 13th 2001". (Memo to all staff from the Governing Body, March 14th, 2001)

The full extent of the financial difficulties that the financial manager had managed to keep from the governing body was revealed following an internal inquiry and can be judged by the introductory comments made in the externally instigated audit by the authority.

“The headteacher and Governing Body may also wish to “revisit” the budgetary allocations, in light of the recently agreed deficit of £140,000, brought forward from the last financial year. This will enable an accurate budget position to be ascertained and financial decisions made to address any deficit that is identified”. (Audit Report, July 2001)

The wake up call to the governing body had been too late to avoid a heavy debt caused by the inefficient financial management of the financial manager; following an agreed loan with the authority the school was able to clear a total deficit of £173 000 by April 2002. The relief experienced by the teaching and non-teaching staff at the removal of the financial manager is summed up by a comments from a member of the LG and PG during the semi-structured interviews.

“The removal of the corrupt financial manager was the beginning of great things. Their downfall allowed the school to move on and I thought bravo CH! CH has to be congratulated for getting rid of them, as they were a terrible person. I used to argue with them as they would not let me have access to the monies collected for the school trips. Everyone senses that they were up to no good but CH actually found them out. CH stands up to people who are dangerous and that takes guts”. (LG, Semi-structured interview, January 16th 2006)

“The dismissal of the financial manager was a great relief, particularly for the financial state of the school. Since that time CH has made the school financially secure and its success is evident in the improved environment and planned physical developments”. (PG, Semi-structured interview, January 7th 2006)

Power struggles in the Governing Body

In April 1998 the Governing Body lacked a lacking clear purpose and vision and were unable to direct with any degree of effectiveness the way in which the school should move. Within it, there were one or two strong characters who allowed the internal politics of the group to influence their work, preventing the Governing Body from having a clear understanding of the school's performance. Individuals, in order to gain an advantage over fellow governors, would encourage staff to contact them if there were any issues of concern, circumnavigating agreed procedures, that stated only the Chair of Governors should be approached by staff, parents or pupils. A member of the Governing Body recalled the divisions within the governing body during the semi-structured interviews.

"When I attended the first meeting I thought that I had never seen so many individual agendas in my life. The meeting was like trench warfare. One member of the Governing Body was battling to create discord for the Head. It was confrontation all of the time." (PG, Semi-structured interview, January 4th 2006)

Statutory obligations of the Governing Body were not being met and a culture of complacency pervaded the work and the level of understanding and competency was low.

"The Governing Body has become a team and it is a pleasure to attend meetings. In the old days the team was purely and simply limited by ability." (PG, Semi-structured interview, January 4th 2006)

Within the governing body a power struggle was being waged which sidetracked them from the prime responsibility of leading the strategic direction of the school and being accountable to parents for the performance of it.

As a consequence of the incorrect procedures and the internal fighting, the governing body, there was a tendency to over-react to comments received, were secretive in their actions and made subjective judgements based on nothing more than innuendo or gossip. In July 1998, a small group of the governing body, held a clandestine meeting at a local pub to discuss complaints they had received from the three members of staff concerning CH.

"You were the focus of many controversial and clandestine meetings and had to challenge it. The myths surrounding you have been destroyed. The proof is in the examination results and the success of the school." (PG, Semi-structured interview, January 4th 2006)

Fortunately, in this case, the governing body gave me their support; although it signalled a procedural issue that had to be challenged in due course. Through the autumn term of 1998 and the spring term of 1999 considerable staff development took place along the lines previously mentioned. Once notification of the impending inspection was made known in May 1999 relationships improved, since the school was galvanised by a common purpose, to obtain a good inspection report.

Whilst the newsletter previously described, was designed primarily for parents, two other publications were introduced during this period, Bill's Briefs for the teaching staff and a Governor's Bulletin for members of the Governing Body. Both publications were produced fortnightly, designed to discuss educational issues. In this way, staff and members of the Governing Body received additional professional development in a non-threatening way, providing them with the competencies needed to move the school forward.

"Classroom practice is in general secure; with good discipline and pupils responding well to the work being set. There is room for subject areas to

consider developing the following aspects of classroom practice: pace, questioning and problem solving". (Bill's Briefs, October 1999)

At an extraordinary meeting of the governing body, in September 1999, it was acknowledged that the governors had been remiss in the running of the school and it was recorded that,

"It was agreed that mistakes had been made by the Governing Body due to lack of training for the governors as to their roles as members of a governing body. Training for the governors was requested". (Minutes of Governing Body meeting, September 9th, 1999)

Acknowledging mistakes had been made represented a major break through for the governing body as they became more aware, through the training put in place, what their responsibilities were. The tightening of procedures and increased level of support by the governing body enabled internal issues in the school to be tackled with greater confidence, safe in the knowledge that I had the support of the Governing Body to challenge underperformance and put in place procedures to remedy in shortfalls in performance. To tackle some of the undercurrents evidenced amongst support staff in the school the governing body were informed through the Governor's Bulletin in 2001 that:

"It is increasingly apparent that some members of the support staff hold a skewed view of what the school is about. There seems to be a lack of understanding of the main aims of the school and what roles they have in helping it achieve its objectives.

As a result, on more than the odd occasion, some of the support staff spend considerable amounts of time undermining what the school is achieving, tending to criticize on a regular basis, whilst happy to receive their end of month pay cheques. This level of hypocrisy needs to be challenged by the governing body, since it is utterly alien to the culture and ethos being developed in the school.

Sadly, the same personnel at the centre of gossip mongering never support the school by attending any of the many and various activities it puts on - despite, sometimes being personally invited to attend.

The level of gossip and backstabbing that emanates from this quarter of the school is no longer acceptable, and with the governor's support should be challenged if we are to avoid any further rift between teaching and non-teaching sections of the school.

Since being appointed to the school I have witnessed first hand some of the behaviour alluded to and have had quite a number of the teaching staff making similar observations to me.

Perhaps now is the time for the Governing Body to tackle these issues and re-educate those concerned". (Governor's Bulletin, December 19th, 2001)

The Governor's Bulletin was also used to keep the governing body informed of the monitoring and evaluation that took place in the school.

"Subject reviews were undertaken during the autumn term. During the term, Subject Leaders were interviewed and all teachers were observed teaching. The review panel consisted of ...Each member of the panel had a particular focus but Subject Leaders were asked to lead the meetings. This year subject areas were asked to write their own reviews in order to foster self-evaluation. The focus areas of the review were:

Examination Results

Teaching and Learning

Review of last year's targets Vision and Leadership

Evaluation and Reflective Practice

Targets 2001/2002

Summary

Once the draft report has been proof read, copies will be provided for the Governing Body and a copy placed on the school's intranet". (Governor's Bulletin, January 17th, 2002)

Once the governing body had received copies of the annual subject review, arrangements were made for subject leaders to address the governing body and to answer questions arising out of the subject review report. In this way, the governing body was made aware of the central issues being tackled, the vision of the school and the views of members of staff.

The meeting served the secondary purpose of demonstrating to staff the support by the governing body of the headteacher and the direction in which the school was being moved. Over time this counteracted the attempts by some of the micro-political groups to undermine the authority of the headteacher, and gave clear warning signals to those unable to improve performance. With the governing body better equipped, that is, with a greater level of competence than previously, it gave me the confidence to pursue rather more rigorously some of the weak performance that still existed in the school.

One particular member of staff at this time was disruptive and controversial in staff meetings and always made the point of leaving the meetings early. I had had reason to raise the standards of classroom teaching with them and following a particularly offensive letter from the member of staff, I wrote in a memo to them:

"I am pleased that you wish to support the further success of the school and its aim of raising standards throughout. There does, however, appear to be a contradiction between your declared intentions and the pervading resonance of your letter. Indeed the tone reflects that which I have witnessed in your attitude and behaviour on two separate occasions recently. I appreciate that opportunities for constructive comments are an essential ingredient in the furtherance of the schools aims but the destructive use of these opportunities is inappropriate and unlikely to lead to an atmosphere of mutual professional respect and trust". (Memo to member of staff, June 8th, 1998)

And to the same member of staff nearly a year later,

"Under section 4.3 of the Teachers Capability Policy I require you to attend a Formal Interview on Wednesday 26th May 1999 at 11.00 a.m. in my office. The formal interview will constitute the date of entry into the formal procedures...You may if you wish, be accompanied by your trade union representative or colleague at the meeting". (Letter to member of staff from headmaster, May 12th, 1999)

In 2000 the member of staff left the teaching profession to take up work in an unrelated sector. The departure sent a signal to the remainder of the staff concerning expectations and served to demonstrate that the leadership team would not shirk from its responsibility

of challenging weaknesses in performance, neither would it be intimidated by micro-political groups or union activity.

Power struggle with a rogue governor (RG)

Although major barriers to change had been overcome there remained a challenge to the leadership of the school in the form of one of the governors who took it upon him self to challenge everything that I was doing. Part of the problem lay with the fact that in the inquiry into the financial manager's behaviour his actions as finance officer had been severely criticised in a vociferous attack by the union involved in the negotiations.

"RG appeared to be the financial manager's puppet and they controlled him in their absence. The financial manager was like a vampire in the wings sucking the life-blood from the school. This period of time was very distressing as I observed CH in his own world. He was distressed and it seemed that the school's saviour was about to become a sacrificial lamb for the financial manager. All members of the LG were worried and I talked at length with the [] and Head of []. We discussed strategies for supporting the Head and we all feared for the future. It was distressing to see that some of the negative members of staff were susceptible to RGs' promises. He was attacking at a time when the school was in the process of transformation. CH had a small team around him but was still in the process of educating the staff. Some of the negative staff members were also feeding RG and this made him feel important and gave him a taste of power". (LG, Semi-structured interview, February 6th 2006)

The rogue governor addressed the school staff in March following the departure of the financial manager.

"RG said that it had been a difficult time and he would not like to see a similar situation arising again. The Governing Body will address the current lack of procedures. In the past the GB has not been strong and HM has taken on a lot of responsibility. This would now change as the GB begin to do their job and governors may be put in charge of particular areas. RG said that he would like closer relationships with the staff to enable problems to be resolved quickly". (Minutes of staff meeting, March 22nd, 2001)

The actions that followed this statement translated into unhealthy practices for the school and threatened the harmony and cooperation within it.

Immediately following the staff meeting RG placed his business card in staff pigeon holes, apart from the leadership group's, with a note suggesting that if staff had any issues they should immediately contact him and he would see what he could do. To a certain extent this was a deliberate policy to undermine the leadership of the school and fostered considerable tension and ill-feeling as the members of staff who felt threatened by changes, or unable to respond to them, used the direct line to RG to give skewed versions of events which the governor took at face value and without further enquiry or validity check.

Even though, by this time the school had significantly increased its population, from around 450 pupils to 700, and results were rising rapidly, the governor concerned continued in his personal vendetta against the school's management and my leadership in particular.

RG felt that there were problems until the headteacher realises that it's the GB who run the school. (Minutes of the Governing Body meeting, 20th November 2001, p4)

In reply, the headteacher stated at the same meeting:

"The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school, something the GB could not do and as such, the comment is unacceptable and illogical". (Minutes of the Governing Body meeting, 20th November 2001, p4)

Within the school, the governor used three members of teaching staff and one non-teaching member of staff as sources of gossip to undermine the leadership of the school. The activities of the four members of staff and the member of the governing body continued unabated through 2001 and 2002. In a letter addressed to the whole governing body, RG indicated his desire to see the headteacher removed.

"Whilst it is quite clear that you do not want me on the Governing Body since I am upsetting the one person who is changing the whole school ethos, despite his

comments that it is I who is doing so, I have tried seemingly alone, and will continue with my campaign whether I am a governor or not. I thank the headmaster for confirming that you will have to put up with me until October 2003, unless of course I resign before that date. There is only one thing that would encourage me to do so". (RG, letter to members of the governing body, 7th September 2002, p2)

Fortunately the governing body were supportive of the headteacher and because RG failed to get the attention he was seeking from the governing body resorted to formally complaining to the Welsh Assembly Government who then wrote to the Chair of the Governors. The Chair stated in his reply to the Welsh Assembly Government:

"The headteacher has taken legal advice since the 18th September and his solicitors concluded, based on substantive evidence collected over a two year period, that there was a potential cause of action under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 which makes it a criminal offence and a tort for anyone to pursue a 'course of conduct' which causes another person harassment, alarm or distress in circumstances where a reasonable person would feel harassed". (CG, Letter to Welsh Assembly Government, December 23rd, 2002)

As a result of the escalating friction between the member of the governing body and myself, I decided in May 2002 to write formally to the Chair of Governors about the bullying and intimidation and to involve my own union who took advice from their solicitors. A report was made to the Governing Body in June 2002. Extracts from the letter and report are given below.

"There appears to be an unhealthy liaison between one of the non-teaching members of staff and RG. It is the opinion of the management and other staff, that this is a source of much one-sided and often factually incorrect, information. RG appears too willing to take at face value information that is given him and unable, or unwilling, to discern fact from fiction. Various members of the Personnel Committee are aware of the subversive activities of the non-teaching member of staff and have been shown evidence that supports this. Additionally RG has been warned by various staff of the dangers of taking at face value gossip and innuendo". (CH, Letter to Chair of Governors, May 7th, 2002)

Extract from report to the Governing Body.

“On Sunday 9th June, RG was quoted extensively in the Wales on Sunday. Firstly, by calling for the headmaster’s suspension and secondly, over a number of allegations he made about the management of the school and the action of the Governing Body. The only conclusion to be drawn from this is either that RG failed to understand the central message of the assembly, or it was a malicious and deliberate act to undermine the Governing Body and the integrity of the headmaster. The action by RG was carried out without consultation or approval of the Governing Body.

It represents a continuation of a long-standing personal vendetta against the headmaster by RG consisting largely of systematic harassment and bullying. In March 2001, RG started his campaign to undermine the management of the school by circulating his personal business card to all staff, apart from the management group, and inciting teaching staff to complain. By his own admission, at an extraordinary meeting of the Personnel and Finance Committees on May 8th 2002, he had no evidence to substantiate further claims he had made in his letter of April 23rd and that any information came to him ‘through the back door’ in the form of gossip and innuendo.

Clearly, RG is in breach of the procedures agreed by the Governing Body for handling any complaints. The Chair of the GB and the union staff representative has confirmed that there have been no complaints about the management of the school in the academic year 2001-2002, for RG to imply otherwise is a blatant misrepresentation of the facts.

On 20th November 2001, in a governing body meeting RG made various claims, which on investigation were also found to be groundless. On 23rd April 2002, RG wrote to [] with further accusations concerning the management of the school, again on investigation these were determined to be without foundation. In the period July – August 2001, the headmaster had to deal with a series of invective and offensive letters from RG; each containing unsubstantiated claims but very much indicative of his bullying and harassment methods. There is a real possibility that the continued malicious and destructive vendetta by RG will lead to a claim for constructive dismissal by the headmaster with consequential serious financial implications of this for the school and Governing Body”. (CH, Report to the Governing Body, June 26th, 2002)

Deliberately the situation had been brought to a head with RG adamantly refusing to present any evidence to the Governing Body in support of the claims being made and the governing body passing a resolution of no confidence in RG and a vote of confidence in the headteacher. It was following this meeting that RG wrote to the Welsh Assembly Government in which he suggested the Governing Body had been negligent in handling

his complaints. RG completed his term of office on the governing body in 2003 and was not invited to reapply for membership.

The fact that the political activities of the rogue governor had reached the press caused letters of support to be written to the school by parents, an example of which is given below.

"I am writing to voice my support for you following the recent comments made on your 'Paradoxical Freedom' assembly in the media.

It is encouraging to see people like yourself attending to the spiritual needs of the children under their care. It takes courage to address the 'hot potato' issues and take the time and effort to discuss the views that are often unpopular in the anti-religious society of today. I know this is especially difficult as those who attempt to present the Christian perspective (as you are legally required to do in an assembly) are often attacked and labelled as narrow minded bigots.

I was very disappointed to hear that some members of the local authority call your presentation of the Christian viewpoint 'inappropriate'.

I have read your wise reply in the Western Mail newspaper and was pleased by many of the letters that were printed in support of you. Please feel free to show this letter of support to the board of governors". (PT, Letter of support, June 17th 2002)

The letter I had written to the editor of the Western Mail, and which was printed unabridged is given below.

"The difficulties that schools face is that whilst they are charged with teaching the difference between right and wrong, and through corporate acts of worship presenting a Christian perspective on life, their efforts are being hampered and undermined by the moral relativism being introduced through legislation and political correctness. Moral relativism creates insecurity in the minds of youngsters where the elastic boundaries between right and wrong allow for morals that are never true or false; they become a matter of personal belief and preference.

For the headteacher who takes seriously the statutory obligation of presenting a Christian perspective, conflict is inevitable. Christians, through their faith, consider there to be an absolute moral code for living, as established through the Ten Commandments and reinforced through the teachings of Christ. It is self evident that, in a largely secular and egocentric society, clashes between the

Christian's absolute moral code and the relativistic moral code espoused through legislation and political correctness is going to occur.

This has certainly been illustrated by the response to the 'Paradoxical Freedom' assembly presented to my pupils some three or four weeks ago. The anti-religious intolerance, which I warned of in the assembly, is clearly demonstrated by the actions and statements of council leaders and others, describing in effect that Christian beliefs are 'inappropriate'. Yet the law is quite clear on this issue, schools must give Christian assemblies and I was doing no more than that which the law requires, even though I have now become the victim of a politically correct 'witch hunt' as a result of complying with it. In defending religious liberty, and more importantly the absolute moral code that accompanies it, I have become a convenient target for malicious and unsubstantiated attacks on my character in an attempt to vilify the right to uphold the tenets of the Christian faith.

The implications for the educational system are far reaching; headteachers and others charged with conducting school assemblies are being denied a legitimate platform from which to voice the Christian point of view for fear of retribution from politically correct groups. The safer option for most headteachers would be to take the middle road of relativism, thereby avoiding confrontation and accusations of discrimination and bigotry. The long-term implications for society will be that pupils will leave schools without a clear and unambiguous framework for right living and the consequent range of social problems accompanying this.

Through this ignorance, pupils are effectively being denied the opportunity to hear arguments from the whole range of perspectives, and the freedom to draw conclusions and judgements for themselves. Schools, by their very nature, must be places where there is freedom of expression without fear of persecution and intimidation, and all schools through their Equal Opportunities Policies will ensure this takes place. The events over the past week suggest that the same principles are not being applied in the public domain.

In the English language, we have coined the phrase 'hot potato' to refer to any delicate or awkward matter that is often too hot to handle. Politicians are sometimes faced with 'hot potatoes'. Their views on asylum seekers for example could lead to accusations of racism, or their views on gay rights could lead to accusations of homophobia. For this reason many people, including teachers, in prominent positions in the public domain, avoid being embroiled with 'hot potatoes' because they could lead to censorship and disciplinary action - or at worst a wrecked career.

The 'Paradoxical Freedom' assembly is a case in point, even though its objective was merely to raise awareness to some of the 'hot potatoes', rather than to debate them in that particular venue. Yet if we are to address some of the more serious problems in society it is essential that pupils leave school with an informed moral framework, distilled from the various perspectives presented and debated through assemblies, PSHE, Sex Education, Citizenship, core R.E, and the many other curriculum opportunities – a fact conveniently overlooked

by those who have made subjective comments about my assembly and deemed themselves to be in a position to make concrete judgements based on 'thin air'. The fact is that my school is renowned for its inclusivity, the balanced curriculum it provides and the tolerance it shows for the views of others.

Teachers are therefore faced with a dichotomy; on the one hand they are increasingly expected by government to address issues such as teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, anti-social behaviour and truancy, whilst on the other see any supportive framework being swept from under their feet through political correctness and legislation that, although rightly protecting minority groups, is doing so at the expense of balanced and reasoned arguments.

Unfortunately, the consequences of this has been that we are being conditioned to give only 'politically correct' answers, avoiding the 'hot potatoes' that affect our life styles and value systems which, over time have accepted rather than challenged, the precepts, norms and expectations underpinning our daily lives.

Over recent years, there has been an increasing shift towards the 'no blame culture'. By this, I mean, as a society we have become increasingly adept at blaming others for our mistakes, our behaviour and our failures. Reading court transcripts reveals lawyers increasingly using 'no blame' arguments to defend the illegal, and often horrendous, actions of others.

This movement towards a no blame culture is partly being fuelled by the pervasiveness of the politically correct movement that through intimidation and harassment prevents individuals from applying absolute moral standards, for fear of being accused of discriminating against one group in society relative to another.

In school this produces interesting and worrying scenarios. For example, I might need occasionally to suspend a pupil for anti-social behaviour but, as has happened, I am then accused by parents of discrimination against the child. This leaves the headteacher in a no win situation, punish the child and risk litigation, don't punish the child and risk a break down of discipline within the school and ultimately society.

'Paradoxical Freedom' was not about condemning any particular group in society, but about defending the right to freedom of speech, in particular to express the absolute moral code of the Christian faith. Individuals lost in the moral maze of relativism and political correctness have perpetrated the ensuing 'witch hunt' which, if allowed to succeed, will produce citizens of the future without a clear, and unambiguous understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and more importantly the freedom to choose between the two.

However, the level of debate that has been produced nationally about this issue would seem to suggest that for most people political correctness is not an acceptable framework for right living, perhaps indicating a radical re-think is needed to address this apparent mismatch in expectations – something from which I can take great encouragement.

As an epitaph I should perhaps let the pupils at my school have the last say by quoting from the award I was presented with at their leaving ceremony two weeks ago. The citation read: 'The certificate is awarded for giving the most interesting and enthusiastic assemblies'."(CH, Printed in the Western Mail, Thursday, 13th June 2002)

On being challenged by a member of staff about the way in which he (RG) had attempted to undermine the head's authority by going to the press, RG stated in his reply that he had made his comments as a businessman and not as a governor. The member of staff, in a written communication to RG, wrote:

...however, the sub-headline refers to you as a 'school governor'. The opening sentence refers to you as a governor. One paragraph in the article even mentions that you are chairman of the Governing Body finance committee. You are quoted as saying that pay rises are given to individuals without reference to the governing body or its personnel committee. What on earth do you mean you were not speaking as a governor? Of course you were speaking as a governor or have you been misquoted again?

...perhaps we are talking about different articles. The one I am talking about has a headline in capital letters just under 5cm long and 3cm wide spanning a total of 46cm, 'I WANT HIM SUSPENDED', and has as its sub-heading the remark, 'School governor blasts headteacher...' RG, is it the editor who is lying or is it you?' (SL, Letter to RG, 26th June 2002, p2)

In December 2003, the Welsh Assembly Government wrote to the governor concerned to draw a line under the events. In their letter they wrote:

"You wrote on 7 September 2002 to each member of the Governing Body making general allegations about the behaviour of the headteacher...the Governing Body concluded that your letter contained no new information and that issues had been satisfactorily considered at the joint personnel and finance committee meeting on 8 May.

We have considered the action taken by the governing body and concluded it was not unreasonable within the terms set out above...

This aspect of your complaint cannot be upheld". (Letter to Chair of Governors from Head of Schools Management Division, Welsh Assembly Government, 19 December 2003)

Whilst this proved to be an extremely trying time as head of the school, the actions of RG had quite the opposite effect on the staff than he had intended. Increasingly members of staff, and the leadership group in particular, became aware of the on-going attacks on my integrity by the governor concerned and the members of the leadership unusually convened an extra-ordinary meeting with the governing body to express their concerns over the behaviour of RG and pledge support for the head. RG was in attendance at the meeting.

Power struggle with the teaching staff

It is inevitable that when working practices are under scrutiny, assumptions challenged and management restructuring taking place, barriers to change occur. It is my opinion that these are often driven by feelings of uncertainty and insecurity and that barriers may be covert, hostile or manipulative. At times of greatest insecurity, staff may retreat behind the protective wall of micro-political groups and, in certain cases, groups may be united by the common desire to maintain the status quo despite belonging to opposite ends of the political and educational spectrum.

Leaders, therefore, need to understand the nature of the micro-political groups and their hidden agendas, whilst at the same time empathising with the insecurity of staff, if changes are to be successfully implemented.

The dilemma in 1998 in the case study school was that in the short term significant changes were necessary in order to improve standards whilst staff competencies were still largely underdeveloped. The underdeveloped competencies resulted in a difficult transition period where policies, procedures and structures were being introduced but staff competencies lagged behind, as continuing professional training took time to develop and impact on performance.

"I remember some of your first meetings where we were expected to contribute to the debate by discussing educational issues. The problem was, we just didn't understand what you were going on about!". (SL, Semi-structured interview December 2003.)

The lack of professional understanding was compounded as the performance of staff increasingly came under scrutiny. I expressed concern about the quality of teaching and how areas of responsibility were being carried out. Through the development of specific job descriptions I emphasised the need for accountability and audited the relationship between job responsibilities and outcomes. Where unsatisfactory performance was challenged, staff tended to displace criticism by arguing that since their practice had been acceptable under previous leadership of the school they did not see why their professional judgements were coming under scrutiny now. The lack of trust in the leadership of the school led to some hostile reactions and for a period of time staff became divided between those who saw the need for change and those who wished to maintain the status quo.

The situation was a difficult balancing act to manage since the school had a good reputation in the community, was acknowledged for its caring ethos and had none of the discipline issues that other schools in the area experienced. In short, it was a secure school to be in, the pupils were friendly and reasonably well behaved and successful in sports and music; by implication it was a good school. The fact that pupils may have been failing academically was not an issue since the expectations of pupils, staff and parents were low and the school perceived to be achieving the best it could with the pupils it had. It was a largely self-fulfilling prophecy.

"The pupils were very passive in the classroom at that time and individual departments were pleased with their results but there was no overview for the

school and no one highlighted the overall percentages for the school". (SL, Semi-structured interview, 20th November 2003)

Three areas of the curriculum were of particular concern; poorly managed and complacent in their approach to teaching and learning. The three subject leaders formed a formidable 'micro-political' group within the school, with a wide sphere of influence. In June 1998, a letter from a parent enabled action to be legitimised by raising some of the issues I had signalled as needing addressing. In the letter the parent stated:

"It seems that high expectations become a motivating factor for pupils and if they are in an environment where they are encouraged to enjoy what they are learning then good results will follow. If teachers have low expectations of pupils this will guide them in the way they teach". (Letter to headmaster from a parent, June 24th, 1998)

The letter continues by expressing concern with the apparent low expectations in the three curriculum areas and inviting comments about what action I intended to take.

At about the same time as the letter from the parent, a visiting Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) interviewed the respective subject leaders and raised similar issues and in particular the drop in GCSE examinations results in 1997. The letter and the HMI report enabled action to be taken and plans containing specific targets for improvement to be agreed. Although the subject leaders had had no choice but to acquiesce they did so with reluctance and continued to be influential with other members of staff calling the strong allegiances between them. Union involvement culminated in an article appearing in a Sunday paper where under the headline, 'Head rejects union claims', the union asserted that three of their members had been in contact with him over the alleged hectoring management style of the headteacher and the introduction of a new sickness policy. In the article and I am quoted as saying:

"We have to introduce quality targets in line with Government policy. Clearly departments vary in their present performance, and any action I have taken has been geared to an improvement in standards...[] seems to be making judgements based on less than 10 per cent of the teachers". (Martin Shipton, Wales on Sunday, 1998)

Interestingly, whilst individual staff may have felt under threat because of the changes taking place, the union followed no procedures before the article appeared in the paper. No union representation had taken place at the school and the union official mentioned in the article had not contacted the school to seek a meeting to clarify issues or to gain an understanding of the situation.

The school culture is a complex array of personalities each with particular agendas, characters and moral boundaries. The fact that outwardly, people may concur and recall the vision of the school it does not follow they are active participants in achieving its aims and objectives, a point discovered by a subject leader appointed to the school in 1997.

"My previous job as second in a very successful and forward thinking department. I was bursting with ideas and ready to lead my own team. However, the rot soon set in when I realised that I did not have a team, I had a group of individuals. I had taken a post in a school that was still in the Dark Ages and the members of the department thought that I was pushy and obsessed with developing schemes of work etc. The first term was a baptism of fire and very distressing. I had decided to complete the year and then escape". (SL, Semi-structured interview, February 6th 2006)

The leader has to be able to discern authentic from inauthentic motives, political agendas and pseudo activities designed to convey one message whilst concealing another. The same subject leader quoted above, recalls the early days in the school.

"I did not want to admit to the Acting Head that I had a complete and utter 'bastard' in the department and was feeling angry, isolated and frustrated. I thought that I would be admitting failure and any comments about the school culture would not be respectful". (SL, Semi-structured interview, February 6th 2006)

The act of leadership is a political minefield where the deployment of strategic disarming tactics is as important to the headteacher as they would be to the major general in the battlefield situation. The head's office is where strategies are formulated, plans activated, intelligence gathered, alliances forged, weaknesses exploited, covert operations executed and battle lines drawn in order to produce the desired outcomes and remain one step ahead.

"CH did not tolerate poor practice and he wanted results and success. He would transform the school and drive it to success but there would have to be casualties. This man was not about to suffer fool gladly and I realised that I would have an ally. I gave him an honest appraisal of my staff and he listened and reacted; at last there was hope". (SL, Semi-structured interview, February 6th 2006)

The difficulty with this is the compromise it creates with the outwardly espoused moral framework and value system of the leader.

In my own case, I have made no secret about my Christian principles and the importance I attach to them in my life and have regularly through assemblies made them known to the whole school community. If then, through actions I take in my leadership capacity, I am seen to contradict the Christian principles that I hold as true, am I likely to diminish the trust that people have, thereby compromising my position and reducing my effectiveness as a leader?

Certainly at times over the past six years I have had comments from staff and parents along the lines of 'I thought you were a Christian' when I have taken decisions which

were perceived as contradicting my faith system and a convenient way of attacking my integrity when outcomes have not been favourable to them.

The question I have had to face is whether to strictly apply the principles and precepts I promulgate to the actions and decisions I make as leader of the school and the implications this might have on my integrity as perceived by the staff. The guiding principle in choosing which route to take has been determined by the long-term benefits for the school as a whole, and I have concluded that this principle is both morally and ethically justifiable. For example, in re-organising the school in 1999 one of the imperatives was to displace various individuals from positions where their effectiveness and competency were limited and put in place those members of staff who through their commitment, drive, enthusiasm and initiative were better placed to move the school forward in achieving its goals and aspirations.

“There was hope, but there were turbulent times ahead. I was informed that I was to become a member of the Leadership Group and it would be announced in the first INSET. I was terrified of people’s reactions and was feeling sick for the whole day. When the news was announced, no one congratulated me. I was about to be a pawn in the great master plan. The old SMT was about to be remodelled and the first casualties had been given a bottle of wine on the day that my promotion was announced. In hindsight, these strategic moves were clever and inevitable if the vision was to be achieved”. (SL, Semi-structured interview, February 6th 2006)

The rationale given in the public domain of the staff room was a hybrid of the truth, since suggesting restructuring was to enable the removal staff from key positions where they represented barriers to change and development would not have been palatable. The espoused rationale does not mean of course that the members of staff affected did not realise what was occurring, although they were afforded protection through the publicly articulated rationale. Overtime the structure put in place has enabled substantive progress in pupil performance to be achieved and this, in itself, justifies the decision to reorganise

in the context that the prime task of all schools is teaching and learning and pupil performance, although it does not necessarily satisfy the moral argument.

The maintenance of my leadership integrity has been important for engendering trust amongst staff, and this has meant the internalisation and privatisation of morally questionable decisions, itself leading to secrecy, even from those within the leadership group. The cultural climate that readily apportions blame, does not accept accountability and projects deficiencies on others, compounds the situation, since truly morally based actions would result in situations where underperformance of individuals is confronted in a more direct and truthful way but which would be unacceptable in a politically correct climate that is ready to hide behind human rights, discrimination, equal opportunities and other political banners to avoid being held accountable for actions and performance. Political correctness has been a source of frustration in the leadership role, since it has meant devising what would be considered as morally indefensible strategies, to avoid confrontational situations and seeking convoluted solutions to politically sensitive issues, this in turn driving the real motives for actions below the surface and forcing the abandonment of basic beliefs for the good of the whole – although this, it could be argued, is both morally and ethically acceptable.

Chapter 6 Interpreting the main themes from the data

Introduction

In Chapter 5 a narrative account of the changes that took place during the time that pupil achievement and attainment improved substantially in the case study school has been provided. The narrative account, supported through the use of extensive data collected from a wide range of sources and perspectives, describes the strategies introduced to effect cultural change and development. Chapter 2 provided details of the range of instruments and comparators used to measure pupil achievement and attainment over time. Additionally, the narrative account discusses three examples of the power struggles that surfaced during a period of significant cultural change.

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret the significant themes emerging from the narrative account in light of the literature review I carried out in Chapter 3 (pp47 - 151). The four significant themes of leadership emerging from the research into the case study school are: vision, strategic planning, competency development and distributed leadership. The four themes are discussed in the sections that follow. Each section starts with a recap of the relevant literature from Chapter 3, followed by what the data from this research shows and concludes by discussing how the findings extend what is already 'known'.

Vision

The importance attached to vision in raising standards and motivating followers to higher expectations articulated through the works of Bush & Glover (2003), Greenfield et al (1992), Dempster and Logan (1998) and Barnett and McCormick (2003), and others has been discussed in Chapter 3, and are consistent with the findings of this research. The criteria used by the inspection framework for judging leadership effectiveness (Chapter 3,

p59) and Leithwood's (1994) eight domains of transformational leadership (Chapter 3, p106) also point to the centrality of vision for raising standards and improving performance. Having a clear vision is also consistent with the views of Bass (1995) where, through inspirational motivation (Chapter 3, p68), leaders create attractive future visions through which followers' enthusiasm and commitment were engendered. The significance of vision in motivating followers to achieve beyond expectation is also consistent with the transformational leadership construct advocated by Burns (1978). Based on the findings of this research, together with the conclusions drawn by other researchers into school improvement and leadership practices, there is a strong case for advocating the fundamental importance of vision for school improvement and development.

The findings of this research suggest the central importance of vision for school improvement. For example, the narrative account (pp200 – 202), describes how the vision of high expectations and achievement was introduced to counter the culture of low expectations and underachievement prevalent in the case study school prior to 1998. The vision was encapsulated through the school motto introduced at the first staff meeting held by the CH (p200); creating the vision was concerned with challenging assumptions and questioning practice (p201). Analysis of the Prize Giving speeches 1998 – 2000 (pp213 – 216) and Subject Reviews (pp223 – 227) further demonstrate the centrality of vision in raising expectations and by implication, school improvement.

Although the conceptualisation of leadership I am advocating places vision at the centre of school improvement, there are a number of differences between the theoretical arguments presented through the literature review and those evidenced through this research. The first concerns the translation of vision into practice and the second the

changing nature of the vision as a school changes and develops. The phases of development discussed in Chapter 5 demonstrate how the vision of the school changed over time; from a vision based on public school image pre-1998 (p201), to explicitly stated objectives in the vision statement of 2002 (p263). Further, the phases identified through the narrative account in Chapter 5, demonstrate the central importance of effective strategies and implementation plans, if the vision is to be achieved at each stage of the school's development. The research also suggests that whilst vision provides the overriding direction, purpose and sine qua non for organisational change, fulfilment of the vision is dependent on effective competency and capacity development.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 3 stresses the importance of vision in raising standards and motivating teachers and is consistent with the findings of this research. However, this research suggests that as a school evolves and develops, as it adopts higher expectations, new visions or aspirations, the strategies put in place to achieve the vision must also evolve over time. The implication of continuous school development being that strategic planning is a cyclical process that involves both evaluating outcomes against objectives and in determining future aspirations and goals for the school. The way, in which the findings of this research add to the current understanding of vision outlined through the literature, is to advocate a cyclical approach to school development that embraces the changing nature of the vision as a school responds to the changing contextual setting. The leadership model I develop in Chapter 7 addresses the issues of changing vision and strategic planning through the introduction of transformational cycles.

Strategic Planning

A number of researchers (Stacey, 1992; Jennings and Wattam, 1998) argue that because long-term outcomes of schools are not controllable or knowable, analytical linear

strategic planning is ineffective. Whereas Boiset (1995) uses the term 'intrapreneurship' to describe the situation where the central aims and goals of the organisation are articulated but the finer strategic planning detail is left in the hands of sub-units. Strategic intent is perceived by Boiset (1995) as an attribute that allows an organisation to plan in a turbulent environment with a broad understanding without the necessity to engage in obsessive detail in the planning process. Both Hamel and Prahalad (1994) and Stalk et al (1992) recognise the importance of strategic capability by which they mean the attributes and abilities necessary to complete the task successfully and for strategically focused schools. Davies (2003) identifies mapping the strategic architecture to align the school to new goals and developing strategic competencies as important phases in their development.

The findings from this research suggest that the strategic plans for 1998-2001 and 2002-2005 (pp254 – 276) assumed to a certain extent a linear and rational predictability. The strategic architecture model fits well with the strategic development in the case study school. Whilst the initial strategic plan (1998-2001) concentrated on establishing the policy framework and providing staff with the competencies associated with monitoring and evaluation, leadership and assessment the 2002-2005 strategic plan developed greater understanding and competencies associated with teaching and learning. Whilst each of the strategic plans reflected the changing strategic architecture as the school evolved and developed, the strategic intent of raising standards, inculcating high expectations and independent learning skills remained the central vision or strategic intent of the school. The Strategic Plan 2002 – 2005 had a different focus and design to the 1998 – 2001 Strategic Plan. It firstly involved all the teaching and non-teaching personnel in its development and secondly enabled subject teams to determine their own priorities within the constraints of the boundaries set by vision 2005. Compared with the 1998 – 2001

plan, there was less direction and greater choice, reflecting the increased competency and capacity of the staff.

The strategic plans discussed in Chapter 5 demonstrate how they interwove the competencies developed within the school's instructional programme and the articulated expectations and vision. The strategic plans evolved as the goals and aspirations of the school changed, although the vision and expectations remained central threads running through the evolving framework. The unifying aspect of strategic planning ensured that increased competencies and capacity were directed towards common goals and objectives that reflected the school's changing aspirations and vision. By including monitoring and evaluation, professional development and targets for improvement, strategic planning enabled continuous cycles of growth and development to occur. The cyclical nature of strategic planning, implied through this research, adds a new dimension to the current perspectives on strategic planning. A theme explored more fully in Chapter 7 where the concept of transformational cycles is introduced.

Competency development

The literature research (Chapter 3, pp72 – 78) reveals that competency and capacity development is generally perceived in terms of promoting student learning (De Bevoise, 1984) through instructional leadership located in teaching and learning (Bush and Glover, 2003). The importance of instructional leadership centred on developing teaching competencies is recognised as being instrumental in changing teaching practice (Chapter 3, pp72 – 74). Conversely, Leithwood (1992) and others argue that instructional leadership which has at its focus classrooms and classroom practice (Chapter 3, p72) is too limiting in scope for whole school developments. The narrow definition of instructional leadership, focused on teaching and learning, is questioned by Davies

(2002), who argues that leaders have a responsibility for developing a range of core competences (Chapter 3, p75); a view shared by Sheppard (1996) and Southworth (2002). Building capacity for a learning community (Mitchell and Sackney, 2001), also infers the need to interpret instructional leadership in its broadest sense, rather than limiting it to teaching and learning competency development (Chapter 3, pp76 – 77).

The findings from this research suggest that the development of knowledge and skills is a precursor to the effective implementation of change. In the case study school, competency development was addressed through focussed training, specifically subject leader's training (pp229 – 241), and indirectly through monitoring and evaluation through subject reviews (pp223 – 227) and data analysis (p241 – 253) and the framework of policies and procedures introduced. It is evident from the narrative account (Chapter 5), that underpinning the school development plans 1998 – 2001 and 2002 – 2005, were strategies specifically designed to facilitate competency development through instructional leadership practices. In the case study school the expectations and aspirations were made explicit through articulation of the vision, competency development ensured the necessary skills and knowledge were in place, thereby enabling the higher aspirations of the school to be achieved. Further, as the aspirations of the school changed, so did the range of competencies developed in order that the changing needs of the school could be met. The research findings suggests that instructional leadership was located in the context of developing a broad range of competencies, rather than those primarily concerned with just promoting student learning, focused in classrooms and classroom practice.

As an outcome of this research I suggest that instructional leadership is conceptualised in terms of a broader definition rather than a narrow description based around teaching and

learning. Although instructional leadership may encompass teaching and learning paradigms, I also perceive it in the wider context of being instrumental for narrowing the gap between the necessary skills and knowledge needed to bring about change and improve performance and those found in practice. I make the case for suggesting that the underdevelopment of competency and capacity leads to constraints on school improvement and development. Whilst the development of teaching and learning strategies impacts on classroom practice (Greenfield, 1997; De Bevoise, 1984; Leithwood, 1992; Blase and Blase, 2000), the broader range of competencies that encompasses leadership development, monitoring and evaluation, data interpretation and assessment impact on the school as a whole. The broader interpretation and application of instructional leadership implied through this research and the implications for practice are explored through the concepts of transformational cycles and competency deficit in Chapter 7.

Distributed leadership

The central issues arising from the literature review are that distributed leadership contributes to school improvement through empowering others and providing the momentum for change to occur. Whilst there is the view that distributed leadership results in capacity building, others perceive ambiguities arising where the autonomy associated with distributed leadership comes into conflict with the desire for control within the context of an accountability model of leadership (p106). Further, it is argued that as tasks become increasingly more sophisticated and technical the changing division of labour represents the emergence of role interdependence and coordination that results in distributed patterns of leadership (p102)

Distributed leadership is seen as contributing to school improvement (Leithwood and Reihl, 2003), primarily with the process of decision-making. The approach supports the notion of shared or distributed leadership being linked to democratic values and empowerment (Bush and Glover, 2003) and perceived as being exercised by people through alliances, support systems and collaborative cultures (Chapter 3 p100). The dichotomy between control and autonomy is raised by Bennett et al (2003) and the significance of a singular leader being the catalyst for change whilst distributed leadership the mechanism for carrying forward the momentum for change is recognised by Harris and Chapman (2002). Further, Gronn (2002) and Wallace (2001), make the case for task-orientated leaders that meet the requirements of specific contexts and events (Chapter 3, pp102 – 103). Graetz (2000) holds that distributed leadership is more effective than positional leadership because it does not depend on a strong leadership at the top of the organisational structure and Harris (2004) argues that effective leadership empowers others in the organisation to take on leadership roles in creating learning cultures where distributed leadership enables organisational development and change (Chapter3, p101). Wallace (p105) argues that teachers are entitled to be part of the leadership process, basing this on the fact that school development decisions affect teachers working conditions. Further, there is a strong case made in the literature review for developing distributed leadership practices in school since this leads to teacher empowerment, effective performance and commitment (Chapter 3, pp120 – 127).

Drawing on the evidence presented in the narrative account (Chapter 5, pp196 - 309) I would argue that distributed leadership and by inference, the mobilisation of power is dependent on a number of factors. Firstly, power can only be conferred on those who demonstrate the competences necessary to exercise leadership effectively; in the sense that leadership is distributed to various organisational members as they become more

competent. Through legitimising power to members of the organisation, leadership is authorised. In the case study school this is demonstrated through the change of ownership of the annual subject review to subject leaders as competencies were developed (p277) and the restructuring in 1999 that provided leadership opportunities to be developed following an instructional programme of leadership training (pp255 – 263). Secondly, the distribution of leadership is a political act, in the sense that the headteacher can use her/his authority to legitimate the power of others. Conferring legitimised power can be used to align the beliefs and values of others to those of the organisation or removed where non-compliance to agreed policies and procedures is evidenced. Evidence of redistribution of power/distributed leadership is seen in the restructuring that took place in 1999 (p309) and the instigation of capability procedures against a member of staff (p295). Thirdly, whilst distributed power/leadership can be conferred on others, the sphere of influence in which it can operate can be regulated and controlled by those with positional authority, in particular the headteacher. The way in which power was removed, and the sphere of influence restricted is demonstrated through the actions taken to deal with the financial manager (p285) and the rogue governor (p297).

The findings of this research suggest there are significant differences between the conceptualisation of distributed leadership outlined in the literature review and those evidenced through the narrative account given in Chapter 5. Although Harris (2004) and others suggest that distributed leadership leads to competency building, there is a strong argument to be made, based on the evidence presented in the narrative account in Chapter 5, that distributed leadership is both a precursor and an outcome of competency building, and a concomitant part of effective leadership practice. The emerging themes arising from the analysis of the leadership actions given in Chapter 5 suggest that whilst distributed leadership can be identified with contributing to school improvement and

change (Leithwood and Reihl, 2003; Harris and Chapman, 2002) there is a case to be made for associating the distribution of leadership to competency and capacity development and also the political dimension of leadership. Whilst leadership is viewed in terms of the distribution of power, influence and authority by Busher and Barker (2003), Bush (2003), Hoyle (1989), Blase (1991) Ball (1987), Bennett (2004), Hoyle (1989) and others discussed in the literature review (pp136 – 143), based on the findings of this research there is a case for suggesting that some aspects of distributed leadership lie in the socio-political activity of leadership practices. The political dimension associated with distributed leadership and the dependency of distributed leadership on capacity and competency development inferred by this research, add additional aspects to the construct discussed through the literature review.

The significant differences between the conceptualisation of distributed leadership evidenced through the research findings and those articulated through the literature review are explored through the concepts of competency deficiency, critical mass dynamic and developing distributed leadership in Chapter 7. Together with the concept of the cyclical nature of school development they form an integral part of the model of leadership developed as a result of this research.

Conclusion

The ideas presented in this chapter have utilised and expanded on the perspectives presented through the literature review and, together with the findings from this research, have been used to formulate a conceptualisation of leadership in practice. In particular, vision, strategic planning, competency development and distributed leadership, have been identified as the main themes to emerge from the narrative account. The critique of the four themes has identified significant differences between the perspectives presented

through the literature review and those presented through the narrative account. Although significant differences have been identified, the conceptualisation of leadership developed nevertheless builds on the perspectives presented through the literature review. The four themes of leadership identified in this chapter form the basis of the model of leadership developed in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7 Transforming Leadership Model

Introduction

This research has been concerned with school leadership processes and how they change over time. The evidence indicates that the culture and ethos of the case study school was transformed from one of low expectations and underperformance to one of high expectations and improved academic outcomes during the period 1998 - 2004. The analysis of pupil performance data has been used to demonstrate that the improvement in academic performance was not due to chance or significant changes in the ability of the pupils entering the school. Further, it has been demonstrated that improvements were the result of a planned strategy that placed teaching and learning at its focus and enabled the capacity and competency of staff to be developed. The three research design elements of a questionnaire-based survey, semi-structured interviews and the analysis of documentation have enabled thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of leadership in practice to be portrayed, a trustworthy account to be written and emerging issues to be identified.

This case study has been concerned with studying leadership in practice, providing first hand evidence that can be used to diagnose the interplay between context, content and processes. Further, through my findings I have demonstrated how leadership processes are fluid and dynamic, capable of responding to changing circumstances and contexts. Drawing on the evidence from this research, I have identified through the conceptual framework introduced in Chapter 6 a number of aspects associated with leadership in practice. The purpose of this chapter is to expand on these aspects in order to develop the transforming leadership model. The key aspects of the model considered are:

Transforming leadership

I make the case for leadership processes that are flexible and responsive to the context in which they operate. Further, I suggest that as the end-points of a school change leadership practices also change and develop. I have defined the contextually driven evolution of leadership practices, the transforming leadership model.

The dynamic nature of school leadership and school development

Through a construct of transformational cycles, I make the case for a fluid and dynamic model of transforming leadership that can respond to the changing needs of, and aspirations within, the school. In particular, I argue that since the end-point of a school changes as it develops, then so too must the leadership, competences and vision of the school evolve to accommodate changing expectations. Within the transformational cycle construct, I identify strategic planning, professional development and teacher empowerment as key components.

Competency and capacity for change

A second construct, competency deficit, is introduced to explain why some schools may not be in a position to support transforming leadership. I make the case that where staff competences have been insufficiently developed in the past this may limit the capacity for change and improvement in the future. The transformational cycle construct addresses the need for competency development within each cycle through appropriate leadership processes that draw strongly on instructional and transactional leadership and continuous professional development.

Sustaining transformation

I draw on the analogy with the critical mass needed to sustain a chain reaction in a nuclear reactor to introduce the critical mass dynamic in relation to staff profiles in schools. In order to sustain the momentum for change and improvement in schools, I argue that a key determinant is the composition of the teaching staff. Where there are insufficient numbers of staff that are willing followers, the chances of successful transforming leadership practices being sustained are limited.

Developing distributed leadership

I argue that the development of distributive leadership is dependent on competency and capacity and is an outcome of effective transforming leadership practices. In addition I suggest that as with transforming leadership, distributed leadership is fluid and dynamic, changing over time as the end-points and needs of the school change.

Key issues and principles

The concluding section of this chapter summarises the key issues identified by this research and lists ten key principles drawn from my own experiences as a headteacher in a transformed school.

Transforming leadership

The difficulty with the transformational leadership construct, articulated through the research of Burns (1978), Bass and Avolio (1995), Leithwood (1994) and others, is that it represents a static approach to leadership that pays insufficient attention to context. Transformational leadership suggests a uniform capacity for change and parallel degrees of effectiveness and efficiency. Based on my research findings, I make the case that the term transforming leadership is a more useful construct, than transformational leadership.

Transforming leadership in practice is micro-contextually driven and evolutionary; whereas transformational leadership constructs are perceived as context free and static. The features commonly associated with transformational leadership constructs can nevertheless be used for analysing and understanding transforming leadership in practice.

Transforming leadership in action is less concerned with theoretical perspectives and more concerned with understanding the complex array of interactions and often competing priorities in schools and the management of these in order to bring about change. It is concerned with the formulation of strategies and action plans that enable the achievement of desired outcomes, being the composite of a range of leadership styles that evolve over time in order to accommodate the changing end-points of the school.

In contrast, the transformational leadership construct, I would argue, is limited to being an analytically descriptive construct used to describe events once they have occurred rather than as a planning tool for change and progression. Through this research, actions have been located in the normative descriptive frameworks articulated through research literature on leadership; but these have not been instrumental in determining the style of

leadership. Rather, they have facilitated a method of coding transforming leadership actions in practice.

In Figure 20 I have summarised the characteristics normally associated with the transformational leadership construct and the transforming leadership model I am proposing as a result of my research in the case study school.

Transforming Leadership	Transformational Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Transforming leadership theory forms a basis for action to achieve specific outcomes in varying contexts.▪ Fluid and dynamic leadership; uses a range of leadership styles in response to changing contextual circumstances and needs▪ Changing vision and aspirations to reflect school progression and development▪ Authority and legitimacy regulated through school needs and context that changes with time.▪ Competency development through focused capacity building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Transformational leadership theory provides a framework for analysis once outcomes have been achieved.▪ Static; transformational leadership defined along the four dimensions of inspirational motivational, individualised consideration, intellectual stimulation and idealised influence with no links to contextual circumstances made.▪ A static vision held by the positional leader.▪ The ability to inspire viewed as a key source of legitimacy▪ No attention paid to capacity for change.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ▪ Competency and capacity development matched to the needs and aspirations of the organisation as they change over time | ▪ Aims to foster capacity development and higher levels of commitment to organisational goals |
| ▪ Competency development of followers through capacity building in order to achieve congruence between leaders, followers and organisational needs and aspirations. | ▪ Assumes followers have the necessary competencies and are willing to sacrifice their self-interest for that of the group or organisation. |
| ▪ Takes cognisance of varying contextual situations including staff profiles and competency and capacity development | ▪ Assumes parallel degrees of effectiveness and efficiency of organisations to manage and lead change irrespective of the varying contextual settings. |
| ▪ Includes transformational cycles to reflect the changing end-points of the organisation | ▪ Assumes one vision. One unchanging vision that need not change to accommodate changing organisational outcomes. |
| ▪ Accepts resistance to change as a natural outcome of the change process. | ▪ Assumes that followers achieve beyond expectation because of the leaders influence. |
| ▪ Increased competency and capacity are assumed to result in extra effort and improved performance at individual, group and organisational level | ▪ Increased capacities and commitment are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity |

Figure 20 Comparison between transforming and transformational leadership

Transformational cycles - sustaining and improving performance

The findings from this research suggest that not only is transforming leadership a fluid and dynamic state but that the vision of the school is not static either. It must transform as the culture of the school develops or the headteacher adapts to a transforming culture. The changing contextual setting leads to a model of transforming leadership that advocates transformational cycles to reflect the changing nature of the organisation and its changing vision. Transformation cycles are self-contained aspects of development with clear aims and objectives; they are not to be confused with continuous change. Transformational cycles represent particular stages of progress and development that are completed before embarking on the next transformational cycle. This allows for initiatives to be followed through and the change processes to develop. It enables outcomes to emerge, indicating success and achievement; whereas a more open-ended continuous change process, may lead to ambiguities, confusion and imprecise final outcomes. Moreover, transformational cycles suggest a leadership model contingent on context, consistent with the transforming leadership model identified through this research. Transformational cycles and transforming leadership is not to be confused with contingency theory, which is not developmental.

Transformational cycles are allied to the changing end-points of the school as it progresses in its development. Each cycle is linked to a specific end-point, for example, reducing the underachievement of boys or increasing the percentage of pupils gaining 5A* - C grades at GCSE. Each cycle has associated with it specific strategies and implications for transforming leadership practices. If schools are to continuously improve and develop, the achievement of one particular set of outcomes will precede the next cycle of improvement and evolution. Transformational cycles suggest discrete but

evolving programmes of leadership practices and changing end-points that enable uninterrupted progression and development to occur. Implicitly linked with transformational cycles are the associated dimensions of capacity for change, the competencies needed to deliver change and monitoring and evaluation frameworks that tracks progression.

The vision for the case study school in the period 1998 – 2001 was different to that for the period 2002 – 2005; each being underpinned by specific strategic areas of development as illustrated in Figure 21.

Areas of development 1998 - 2001	Areas for development 2002 - 2005
Policies	Refined tracking system
Framework	Basic skills development
Targets	Action research
Monitoring and evaluation	Accelerate learning
Expectations	Five stage lesson plan
In-house training	CPD concentrated on teaching and learning
Developing leaders	Boys' underachievement
Subject reviews	Key stage 2 – 3 transition
Accountability	Restructuring
Data analysis	

Figure 21 (CH, Restructuring - Power Point presentation to teaching staff, March 1st 2004)

The aims and objectives underpinning the strategic areas identified in the 1998 – 2001 strategic plan were mainly related to the operational infrastructure of policies and procedures necessary for the effective day-to-day management of the school. In addition, the strategic plan 1998 – 2001, sought to develop the capacity for change through an instructional programme of competency development. The areas identified in the 2002 –

2005 strategic plan built on the foundations established through the 1998 – 2001 strategic plan. The change in the focus of the 2002 – 2005 strategic plan represented a strategic leap as it sought to develop competencies further, through enhanced understanding of teaching and learning, data handling and the introduction of reflective practices through action research. The aim was to sustain improvements in performance and meet the more challenging aspirations of the school through capacity and competency development.

In order to sustain improvements over a period of time, it was necessary to change the school vision so that it adapted to the transforming social and cultural environment. The reality for leadership in practice is illustrated in the concept of transformational cycles illustrated in Figure 22.

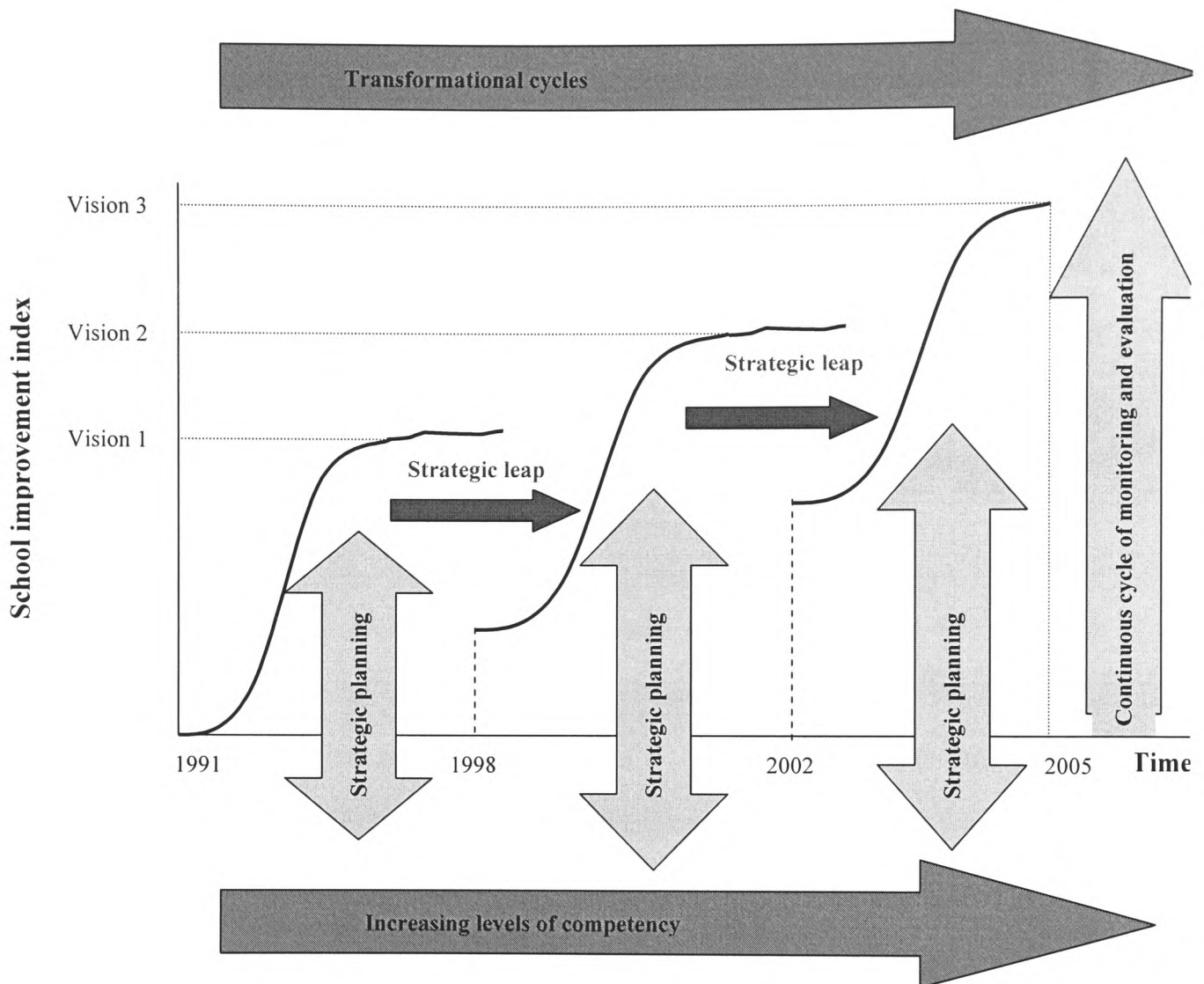


Figure 22 Transformational Cycles

Figure 22 shows time on the horizontal axis and school improvement index on the vertical. The school improvement index is correlated to the vision for the school. The vision being interconnected to the targets for improvement established through the school development plan.

In the case study school, the time line started in 1991, when the school became grant maintained and Vision 1 established. Vision 2 represents the targets and aspirations established by the incoming head in 1998 and Vision 3 moves along the time line to

2005, to correspond with Vision 2005 established in 2002. Each successive vision moves the school along the school improvement index as well as along the time line. Underpinning each visionary statement is the strategic planning put in place to achieve the vision and alongside that is the continuum line representing the increasing levels of competency of the teaching staff. As each stage of the transformational cycle is achieved, a strategic leap is needed to transform the school to higher levels of achievement and a corresponding development in the leadership style to reflect the new, and more demanding, aspirations of the school. Continuous monitoring and evaluation form part of the model, the purpose of which was to track the progress being made towards achieving the specific aims and objectives of a particular transformational cycle.

The transformational cycles of development have similarities with the new models of planning developed by Davies (1999) and Ellison (2001) in which the differential between strategic intent and strategic planning is teased out to articulate the four stage development model of planning. In essence, Davies and Ellison, draw out the differences between intent and strategic planning.

“Whilst strategic planning builds on the foundation competencies in place, strategic intent will only be realised once deep-seated cultural change and fundamental re-thinking by building organisational capability and competencies has been successfully tackled”. (Davies, 2002, p204)

The transformational cycle model takes the Davies and Ellison model further and develops it by suggesting continuous, but distinct, cycles of improvement to reflect changing contextual circumstances and incorporating the concept of competency deficit at the starting point of each strategic leap within a transformational cycle.

In the case of the school, the vision prior to 1998 was concerned with establishing the school along independent school lines and fighting for survival within a politically

skewed environment. The 'independent school aspects' were primarily concerned with ensuring the orderly and disciplined behaviour of pupils synonymous with pupils attending private schools, rather than improvements in academic performance. A calm and orderly atmosphere was achieved through a range of strategies, and staff at the time had the competencies to apply the principles of class control and discipline within their teaching domain. With hindsight it is perhaps easy to criticise the vision as being narrow in its perspective and neglectful of the school's prime function of teaching and learning. An example where there was little congruence between the school's vision and that expounded through the inspection framework and government targets. Certainly the school had a vision and the evidence suggests that the majority of the staff at the school shared it. Whether in the long term the vision was appropriate or sustainable in the light of the changing educational climate that called for greater accountability and the public awareness of the school's academic performance, is questionable.

The appointment of a new head in 1998 brought with it a very different vision for the school, Vision 2 on Figure 22. The vision, which focused on raising academic standards through improving teaching and learning strategies, described earlier, depended on the level of staff competencies for its fulfilment. The strategic planning put in place in 1998 reflected the need to address staff competencies whilst at the same time establishing the framework through which the school could operate. Part of the plan was also to challenge and tackle the low expectations of parents and pupils and begin to change the culture of the school so that it was more orientated to enabling pupil learning, whilst at the same time building on the firm foundations of discipline and standards of uniform that had been established by the previous head of the school. For the majority of staff the change in the emphasis of the vision represented a strategic leap that had to be underpinned through effective professional development activities. The leadership style at that time

was predominantly autocratic whilst at the same time placing considerable emphasis on instructional processes. The approach enabled teaching staff to move along the competences continuum as new skills and knowledge were gained through professional development activities.

In this context, competencies refer to the skills and knowledge needed to achieve specifically agreed targets and objectives linked to the vision of the school, for example, to raise pupil attainment the skills and knowledge associated with effective classroom practice and motivational teaching would be paramount. As the aspirations of the school changed, then so too did skills and knowledge acquisition. In this sense, the development of competencies is a rolling programme of continuous professional development designed to equip staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to accomplish school expectations. The competencies continuum represents the range of skills and knowledge gained by staff through a continuous cycle of professional development and evaluation. The effectiveness of the instructional processes was monitored and evaluated through the internal annual subject review audit and the improved level of competence and accountability were responsible for the realisation of Vision 2 in 2002.

The period 2002 – 2004 witnessed the school making a second strategic leap so that it could achieve Vision 3. As with the previous vision statements there were implications for the level of staff competences and the strategic planning needed to ensure the vision became a reality. During the period 2002 – 2004, the leadership style evolved to accommodate the changing culture and aspirations of the school, suggesting that leadership styles are not static but fluid and dynamic, forming part of the transformational cycle. In the period 1998 – 2001 the leadership drew heavily on instructional and transactional practices, largely as a result of the underdevelopment of

teacher competencies at this stage in the school's progression. As the skills and knowledge base were put in place it was possible to nurture and develop leaders at various levels in the school. This strategy led to a change in the leadership style I exercised. As capacity and competency increased, opportunities were created that enabled transforming leadership to draw increasingly on shared, distributed and collegial leadership practices. Not only had the school been transformed but the leadership style transformed a well. This represented a natural progression as the school evolved and changed, enabling the momentum for change to be maintained and higher levels of success to be achieved. I would argue that not only is it necessary for strategic leaps to occur if levels of achievement are to be raised but implicit in this is the need for leadership transformation as well.

In describing the way in which executives in corporate business adopt leadership styles to meet varying organizational needs, Sarros and Santora (2001) report:

"I think they use an autocratic style at times, they can use participatory styles at times. It is a case of not being particularly myopic about one particular management style but having the ability at times to perhaps translate the requirements of the organisation across a couple of styles". Sarros and Santora, 2001, p385

The strategic planning in this stage of the school's development was founded on a more thorough exploration of teaching and learning strategies than previously. Specific leadership and management training for middle and senior management levels were introduced. The competences necessary to service the strategic leap between 1998 and 2001 had been at a basic level, since the base line achievements in 1998 had been low. To ensure the strategic leap necessary for further improvements in performance a more focused and in-depth understanding of educational processes was needed. Pre-eminent amongst the action plans pre-2001 was the establishment of basic school policies and job

descriptions, the introduction of monitoring and evaluation techniques, data analysis and the procedures for target setting. Post-2001, priority has been given to action research and reflective practices. Further, differential performance, action planning and motivational teaching and leadership featured strongly in the strategic plan, thereby reflecting the increasing complexity and depth of staff competences and the higher expectations of pupil and staff performances.

Each transformational cycle requires knowledge of staff competences since these determine whether staff members are sufficiently empowered to exercise ownership and share the vision for the various phases of development. Within each transformation cycle there exists a sub-cycle that is concerned with creating opportunities for professional development, strategic planning and the empowerment of staff. It would not have been possible for the school to achieve Visions 1 or 2 without clear direction on the processes necessary or the associated staff competences in place. Arguably at the start of each new transformational cycle staff are to a certain extent educationally deficient. This notion means that whilst the competencies in place were adequate for previous developmental stages they only represent stepping-stones for new competences to be formulated and honed. Within any transformational cycle, transforming leadership draws on aspects of instructional, transactional, collegial, autocratic, and other leadership styles according to the level of competency exhibited by staff.

Figure 23 illustrates this model, representing a strategic leap within a transformational cycle, a name that suggests a continuously rolling programme of development and advancement. The key features of the model are the continuums of strategic planning, leadership transformation, continuing professional development and empowerment. The continuums are unlikely to exhibit a linear progression or be co-terminus because of the

varying degrees of acceleratory progress and the time delay between them, but are interconnected through the network of policies, procedures and frameworks put in place through the school's documentation. The overriding driving force for sustained development is the overarching vision of the school, which is determined through self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement.

The strategic leap within a transformational cycle

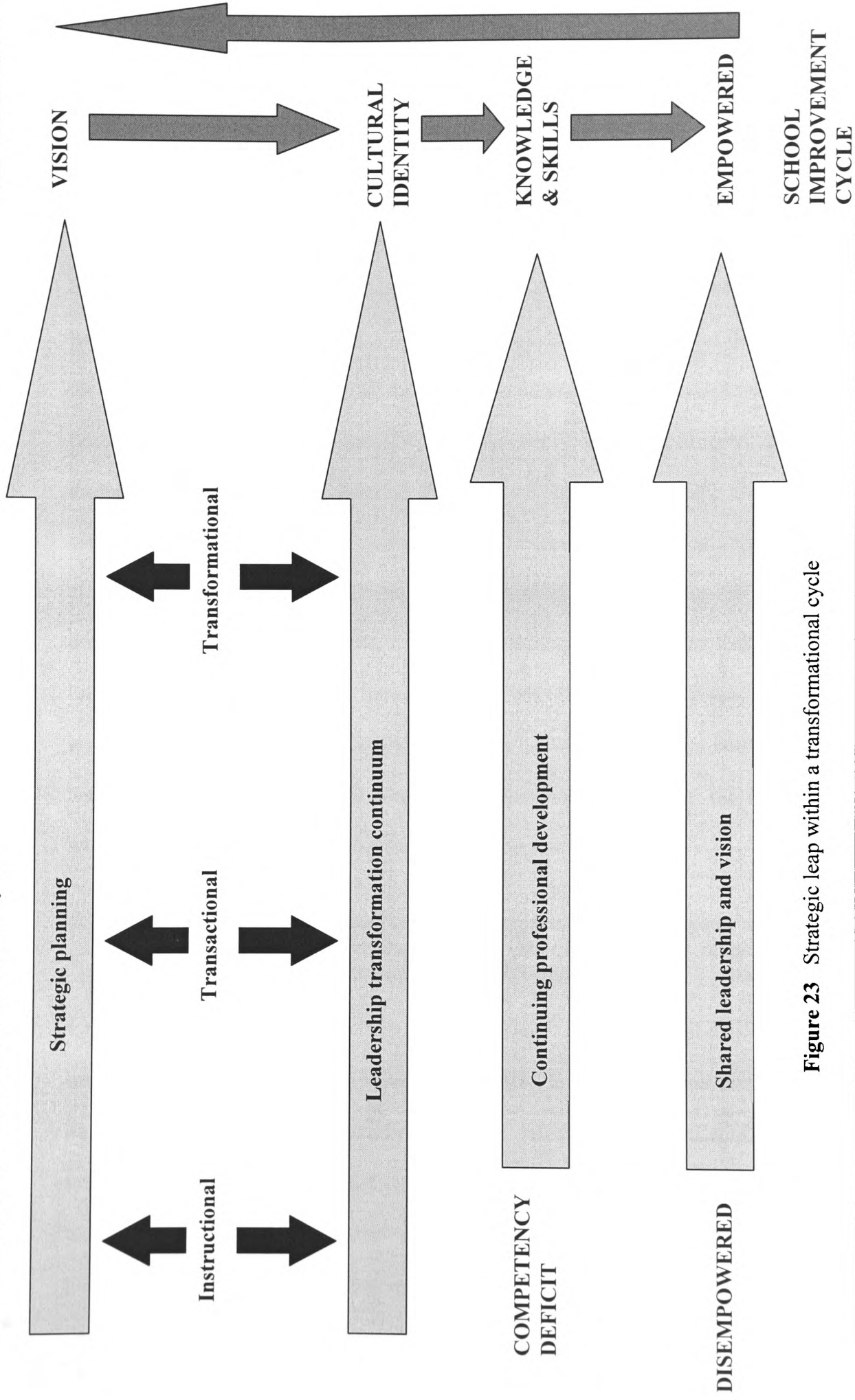


Figure 23 Strategic leap within a transformational cycle

The cyclic model can be applied to whole school or within specific subject and department areas. For this reason an essential ingredient in the transformation process has been the focus on leadership training at leadership group, operational managers, heads of division and subject leader levels, enabling distributive leadership practices to be developed. The leadership-training programme was driven by the need to ensure that key leaders in the school had a clear and consistent understanding of the vision for the school and what it was trying to achieve. In essence, the programme of training enabled distributed leadership practices to be developed and a cascading of the vision through the school. Thereby ensuring there was a shared understanding and sense of ownership of the vision – this empowered staff. However, it was equally important to establish the boundaries within which the key leaders operated since the overriding duty of the headteacher is to guide the school's development and strategically map out the priorities and appropriate time scales. Where the transformational model of leadership fails, is in recognising the importance and key role of the headteacher in determining the vision and direction of the school and in particular the boundaries within which distributed leadership functions and operates.

"Leader's must guide development as appropriate to its context, set the direction of its development, and know and understand the short, medium and long-term development priorities". (James & Connolly, p151)

Competency deficit

Implied in the transformational model of leadership is the assumption that followers have the necessary competencies and capacity to implement change, whereas the evidence from my research in the case study school indicates otherwise. In the early days of tenure as headteacher in the case study school, a significant part of the strategic planning put in place was concerned with developing staff competencies, thereby

enabling change to occur. These strategies have been discussed earlier in this thesis in Chapter 5.

In the way I have sought to interpret my findings, I consider staff competency to be concerned with skills and knowledge acquisition, whilst capacity is a measure of the flexibility and readiness of the school to manage and introduce change. Competency and capacity have a direct correlation. The absence of particular skills or knowledge could limit the capacity of an individual, group or school to respond to proposed initiatives or the effective management of change. Where competency development is limited, the capacity of a school to successfully embrace change may be restricted or severely limited.

In my narrative account I refer to the subject leader training that was implemented as part of the strategic development in the case study school during the period 1998 - 2004. The purpose of this strand of the school development plan was to improve the professional competencies of subject leaders and through that to improve the capacity to manage and implement change effectively. I also make the case, based on careful analysis of contemporaneous and archive material, that in the case study school standards of performance pre-1998 were limited by the underdevelopment of relevant competencies.

For example, I discuss in detail the significance of data analysis as a means of raising standards of performance through effective target setting and how this skill was largely underdeveloped in the school pre-1998. I make the point that pre-1998, data analysis was carried out at a superficial level, limiting its usefulness in setting targets for improvement or identifying differences in pupil or teacher performance. I identified the lack of the competencies relating to data analysis as one of the contributory factors that

restricted the capacity to raise standards of performance in the case study school pre-1998. It was an absence of specific skills and knowledge that limited capacity rather than it being an issue of capability.

Raising standards of performance and facilitating change is conditional on teachers acquiring the range of skills and knowledge necessary to support change. In my transformational cyclic construct, strategic leaps are underpinned by targeted strategic planning. Through strategic planning, the skills and knowledge needed to bring about change and sustain improvements are identified and addressed. For example, in the case study school, the sustained improvements in the period 1998 – 2004 would not have been possible without improvements in the performance of boys or greater value added at Key Stage 3. Through training programmes that focused on motivational teaching and preferred learning styles of pupils, these two issues were addressed. The training programme served the purpose of increasing the competencies of teaching staff and therefore the capacity to bring about change in classroom practice.

The changing end-points of a school suggests that competency development should be a continuous process of professional development designed to accommodate the changing, and more challenging, aspirations of the school. The strategic planning that underpins each of the strategic leaps in my transformational cycle construct is indicative of this rolling programme of competency development.

My analysis of archive and contemporaneous documentation in the case study school suggests that prior to 1998 there was a skills deficit that limited the capacity of the school to bring about improvements in performance. A skills deficit is where there is a difference between the skills and knowledge present and those needed to bring about change and sustained improvement. The teaching and learning skills deficit translated

into working practices characterized by low expectations, limited teaching strategies and inconsistencies in classroom standards in the school. The deficit in teaching and learning skills were further compounded by deficits in the leadership and management skills of those with subject responsibility. In practice, the leadership and management skills deficit resulted in poorly led departments, the absence of assessment procedures and effective monitoring and evaluation practices.

I have coined the phrase competency deficit to describe a skills shortfall. The phrase implies an absence of the necessary skills and knowledge needed to bring about change and improve performance. It is indicative of the difference between desired skills and knowledge and those found in practice. The term implies a limiting constraint on school improvement and development. In the context of transformational cycles it represents the starting point of each new phase of development. Whereas the skills and knowledge base may have been adequate for previous phases of the school development, they may not be sufficiently developed for achieving future aspirations of the school. The transformational cyclic model suggests changing end-points, the consequence of which is an implied need for continuous skill development to service new, and higher aspirations. Where there is a mismatch between aspirations and the competencies needed to achieve them, a skills deficit exists. In this context it may be argued that there is a deficit in staff competencies because the skills and knowledge base in place are unable to service the new and more challenging aspirations of the school.

I have previously described transforming leadership as being concerned with understanding the complex array of interactions and often competing priorities in schools and the management of these in order to bring about change. Further, I

suggested that transforming leadership was micro-contextually driven and evolutionary. This view of transforming leadership is consistent with the transformational cycles construct and the competency deficit model. Transformational cycles reflect the changing nature of the organisation and its changing vision whilst at the same time accommodating the need for skill and knowledge development. Each discrete cycle raises the levels of achievement and performance of the school. It must follow from this, that competency levels and the capacity of the school for change are also increased due to the continuing professional development within each cycle.

The changing and improving competency levels, have implications for the way in which leadership is exercised at each stage of the school's development. The changing pattern of leadership practices would be consistent with transforming leadership, which I have described as a fluid and dynamic form of leadership, able to respond to changing contextual circumstances. It follows from the dynamic nature of transforming leadership, that the practice of leadership at any one time may contain elements from different models of leadership. In my narrative account the changing leadership practices and how they were linked to the various stages of development of the school have been mapped out. The various leadership practices deployed at each stage have been identified and described through reference to the theoretical perspectives of leadership outlined in the research literature. The descriptive models and frameworks of leadership have been used as analytical tools rather than as bases for action.

There is a strong case for suggesting that the form of leadership exercised at any one time is dependent on the competency deficit evidenced in the school. For example, in the period 1998 – 2001 in the case study school, the leadership competences of middle managers were largely underdeveloped. There was a competency deficit that precluded

the development of distributed leadership practices through the school. Similarly, teaching and learning skills were underdeveloped in the context of classroom practice, which in turn limited improvements in pupil performance and produced inconsistencies in teacher performance. The narrative description of this period indicates that the leadership practices drew heavily on those characterised by instructional, transactional and autocratic models of leadership, whereas the period 2001 – 2004 has been characterised by increased shared leadership practices following successful subject leader training designed to increase middle managers leadership skills.

Arguably, key to effective transforming leadership is a knowledge and understanding of the competency levels within the school and how these impinge on capacity for organisational change and progression.

The critical mass dynamic

Introduction

Previously, I have made the case that competency and capacity development are limiting factors in organisational change and progression. Further, I have shown that the style of leadership exercised is also directly related to competency and capacity of the school at each stage in its development, where each stage of the school development is characterised by discrete transformational cycles having particular aims and objectives. The purpose of this section is to consider some of the other factors arising from my research that impinge on the capacity for change and the implications of these on transforming leadership practices.

Responses to change

There has been extensive research on the resistance to change. The lack of self-confidence and ability (Morris and Raben, 1995; O'Toole, 1995), increased fear and anxiety (Morris and Raben, 1995; Smith and Berg, 1987), threats to the status quo (Beer, 1980; Hannan and Freeman, 1988; Spector, 1989), have been identified as reasons for resistance to change. A possible solution advocated is through confidence building and trust and an understanding of the emotional reasons for resistance to change (Connor, 1995). Whereas Ford et al (2002) suggests that understanding and interpretation of the background conversations of complacency, resignation and cynicism is a necessary part of the solution.

I have outlined in my discussion of competency deficit the connection between capacity for change and competency development. In the case study school, competency development was achieved through an instructional programme. Over time, competency development enabled distributed leadership practices to emerge. Arguably, by reducing the competency deficit through skills and knowledge acquisition, resistance to change can begin to be effectively managed; especially where there is a strong reason to suggest that resistance to change is due to a lack of self-confidence and ability. An instructional programme of competency development that provides participants with the necessary skills would serve to ameliorate a lack of self-confidence and ability. In the case study school increased self-confidence has been achieved through competency development. The targeted training programme for subject leaders had a specific aim of developing leadership skills. By drawing on instructional and coaching paradigms, the skill development of subject leaders has been instrumental in reducing their resistance to change and in their becoming committed and effective leaders of change. The growth in self-confidence is demonstrated through

an increase in the number of teaching staff volunteering to carry out action research within subject areas, to leading forums related to school development.

Complacency, as Ford et al (2002) suggest, forms part of the background noise related to resistance to change. In the case study school, complacency was a feature of the background noise encountered in the early stages of my tenure in the school. In practice, the complacency translated into low expectations of pupil performance and a belief that the pupils were achieving as well as they might against the backdrop of a valleys culture, where through an argument that suggested pupils could not be expected to achieve any better, justification for continuance of established working practices was being made. The reaction to challenging the status quo and complacency led to opposition and resistance to change. Staff felt under threat, as they perceived their professional judgements were being questioned. The narrative account given in Chapter 5 outlines how complacency and low expectations were challenged. The strategies involved establishing a clear vision based on high expectations, and putting in place an infrastructure that supported motivational teaching and the effective use of monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Evidence from this research points to further causes, other than those already referred to, of resistance to change. Resistance to change was orchestrated through the actions of groups and the struggle for power, influence and authority by individuals. Groups refer to those staff drawn together by mutual interests and concerns. For example, in the case study school one group consisted mainly of those staff that had been at the school since becoming grant maintained. In the early stages of my headship, the grant maintained group fought for continuation of the working practices of the preceding seven years. The justification being characterised by a resigned acceptance that

improvements in performance were unlikely given the cultural backdrop of the school. Resistance to change ranged from challenging the rationale underpinning policy development to non-implementation of teaching and learning strategies. The instructional programmes aimed at increasing competence, capacitance and confidence produced few immediate changes within the grant maintained group. As a result I drew heavily on transactional aspects of leadership during this period to achieve compliance through a system of reward and punishment.

During the period 1998 – 2004, the case study school has witnessed substantive and sustained improvements in the performance of its pupils. It is my thesis that to a large extent the improvements have proved to be an effective antidote to the negativism of the various groups within the school. Arguably, the improvements in performance have served as a catalyst for building trust and confidence in the leadership of the school. The background conversation of cynicism and acceptance of the status quo have, over the period, been largely replaced by optimism and an increasing readiness to embrace change. The impact of various groups within the school has been diluted through the ideas and impetus of staff recruited to the school in response to the increase in the number of pupils on roll.

In an attempt to resolve the issues surrounding resistance to change in the case study school I have drawn on a range of leadership styles. The way in which I deployed varying leadership styles is consistent with my model of transforming leadership. A form of leadership that is adaptive and responsive to the changing cultural perspectives within a school. However, pragmatically it cannot be claimed that resistance to change can ever be completely removed. Each discrete transformational cycle with its higher

aspirations, and by implication demands on staff, will create new opportunities for resistance to occur.

Introducing the critical mass dynamic

I argue, therefore, that resistance to change and power struggles will always form a backdrop to educational change. A transforming leader will be aware of this and through various leadership practices and political actions will attempt to minimise its impact on the progress and development of the school. It is in this context that I introduce the metaphor of the critical mass dynamic. The use of the term critical mass draws on an analogy with the critical mass of uranium necessary to sustain a chain reaction in a nuclear reactor. Below a certain critical mass a chain reaction will not be self-sustaining and the energy output drops. Similarly, I am suggesting that in a school, if there are insufficient numbers of motivated staff, or weak organisational structures to sustain developments and maintain the momentum for change, initiatives will fail and transformation of the culture difficult to achieve. Effective transforming leadership practices should therefore aim to limit the growth of resistance to change and ensure that the staff profile remains above the critical mass of staff needed to sustain growth and development.

The critical mass dynamic is not just related to resistance to change. As has been already discussed, staff competencies form an integral part of school progress and development. The absence of necessary skills and knowledge reduces the capacity for organisational change and growth. In the case study school, the two elements of competency deficit and resistance to change were present in 1998. In some instances the two elements were indistinguishable, since competency deficit resulted in a resistance to change. Whilst in other cases resistance to change was driven by micro-

political agendas and the lack of teacher performance by a skills deficit. Aspects of instructional, transactional, coaching and distributive leadership practices were drawn on to increase competencies and reduce resistance.

The school staff profile is therefore an important issue when it comes to instigating behavioural change through transforming leadership practices. Since, if numbers on the staff are skewed in one particular direction, it may not be possible to successfully implement change. Although contrived compliance is possible through contractual obligations, job descriptions and transactional exchanges.

If transforming practices are unsuccessful in changing the culture of a school it may be due to an imbalance in the staff profile. Where critically, those staff remaining uncommitted or unresponsive to instructional, transactional and transformational practices outnumber those staff that are. A critical mass may be reached where, despite effective leadership practices, a significant proportion of staff remain unconvinced, unwilling or lacking in the necessary competencies to embrace change. What ratio of unresponsive to responsive staff is needed in order to successfully introduce change is an area that needs further research and clarification. For example, the critical mass dynamic may have been a contributory factor in those schools where 'super heads' have been drafted into failing schools, only to fail to turn them round, despite having had excellent leadership reputations and results in other schools. It may also help explain why some schools continue to make limited progress or some staff rooms appear more political and militant and more inclined to invoke union intervention than others.

Assuming that the critical mass dynamic model is representative of schools in general it suggests that leaders and those involved in leadership training need to reassess the

assertion that transformational leadership is a panacea for improving schools. Clearly, if the critical mass dynamic model has validity, this will not be the case where the culture of a school and staff profile falls close to, or below the critical mass. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that different school cultures will have different critical masses, and an uncertainty of where, on the micro-political continuum, the intersection point is likely to lie. In practice this is unlikely to be clear-cut since there will be many varied factors that contribute to the overall picture. However, what is clear is the need for headteachers to understand the culture of the school and the teaching staff before embarking on wholesale transformational processes.

“Case studies of principal succession provide compelling anecdotal evidence that inattention to social norms in a new context may trip up a successor, even the most experienced and successful principal with laudable goals”.
(Hart, p457)

The implications for transforming leadership practice

In the previous section I introduced the critical mass dynamic as an indicator of the resistance to change. In this section I discuss the implications of the critical mass dynamic on transforming leadership practices. Firstly, I look at the implications for interpersonal relationships. Secondly, I consider the importance of capacity building on the critical mass dynamic and thirdly, I make the case that the growth of distributed leadership practices is dependent on both capacity and competency development and by implication, the critical mass dynamic.

It follows from my discussion of the critical mass dynamic that a precursor to effective change management is the need for a detailed knowledge and understanding of the school socio-political context and its staff. In particular, knowledge of staff competencies, aspirations and the educational philosophy of the various teacher and micro-political groupings within the school. The requirement to know and understand staff well implies

the existence of frameworks and procedures that encourage the development of interpersonal relationships. Amongst others, the qualities I perceive as characterising interpersonal relationships include honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, inspiration, competency, self-confidence, awareness, drive and openness to new ideas. My research suggests that the development of effective interpersonal relationships leads to improved levels of communication and constructive dialogues with and between staff. It is through improved lines of communication that knowledge and understanding of staff can be gleaned and actions plans formulated to moderate resistance to change and provide greater control of the critical mass dynamic.

In my introduction to the critical mass dynamic I suggested a range of factors as possible causes of resistance to change. Amongst others, I made the case that some resistance to change has antecedents in staff competency levels. Furthermore, as I have already discussed in Chapter 5, having in place appropriate staff competencies is a precursor to school progression and development since the absence of necessary skills and knowledge reduces the capacity for organisational change and growth. I introduced the term competency deficit to describe the situation where there is a difference between desired skills and knowledge and those found in practice. Consequently, I would argue that the critical mass dynamic must, to a certain extent, be dependent on the difference between actual and desired competencies, the competency deficit. Through focussed capacity development, transforming leadership practices should aim to narrow the gap between actual and desired competencies in order to reduce the competency deficit, and to sustain change and progression. By reducing the competency deficit, a more manageable critical mass dynamic and the capacity of the school to embrace change and development becomes a possibility.

The efficacy of distributed leadership practices, I would argue, is dependent on staff possessing the necessary skills and attributes to lead and manage change, and where there is minimal resistance to the change process. In the absence of appropriate skills and knowledge, or where resistance to change forms a significant backdrop to socio-political interactions, effective distributed leadership would not be possible. The reason for effective distributed leadership not to be possible is that where there is significant resistance to change it points to an incongruence between individuals and groups of staff, having differing agendas and visions; which may be inconsistent with those of the organisation, therefore presenting a barrier to change and progression. The purpose of capacity and competency development is to equip staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to lead and manage change whilst at the same time ensuring a consistency of approach and a clear understanding of the rationale underpinning the whole school vision. There is a strong case for suggesting interconnectedness between capacity, competency and the critical mass dynamic and the degree to which distributed leadership practices are evidenced in a school. I have taken the opportunity to discuss in greater detail the development of distributed leadership in the following section.

Developing distributed leadership

Introduction

Evidence from research (Leithwood and Reihl, 2003) suggests that distributed leadership contributes to school improvement and competency building although other research (Harris, 2004, p13) suggests that evidence for the form that distributed leadership takes in practice is limited. A similar conclusion can be drawn from the research undertaken by Harris and Chapman (2002) into schools considered to be improving in terms of student outcomes. Harris and Chapman argue that whilst

singular leadership was often a catalyst for change within schools, the momentum for continued improvements was more likely to occur where distributed leadership in practice was evident.

Competency development and distributed leadership

Whilst the evidence from this research suggests that distributed leadership did contribute to improvements in the performance of the school, arguably there are fundamental differences between theory and practice in how distributed leadership evolves. There is some degree of resonance with theory in the case study school, where the initial impetus for change and improvement came from the positional leadership of the headteacher. However, whereas Harris (2004) and others suggest that distributed leadership leads to competency building, I make the case that distributed leadership is both a precursor and an outcome of competency building, and a concomitant part of effective transforming leadership. Although I concur with the view that latent leadership potential can exist at all levels in a school I would argue that it might remain untapped where a competency deficit exists. The implication for practice being that the development of distributed leadership depends on staff having the necessary skills and knowledge in place before being in a position to exercise a leadership role.

I have demonstrated through this research that in the early days of tenure in the case study school there was a considerable competency deficit, particularly at subject leader level. This translated to weakly led subject areas, low expectations and inconsistency of standards and expectations between subjects. The training programme put in place, as part of the strategic development of the school, was directed towards competency building of subject leaders. The competency deficit of subject leaders evidenced in the period 1998 – 2001 constrained the growth of distributed leadership in the school and

the capacity to effectively manage change. I have discussed in Chapter 5 a number of the strategies used to enhance the competencies of subject leaders, including data analysis, monitoring and evaluation and assessment for learning.

Reducing the competence deficit enabled subject leaders to lead subject areas more effectively and with increased autonomy and confidence. Analysis of minutes of subject departments demonstrates how, over time, subject meetings evolved from being largely administrative exercises to developmental meetings, as subject leader training was translated into working practices. In 1998, as has already been described in Chapter 5, the annual subject review was carried out almost entirely by the headteacher. In 2003, other than examination data analysis, the annual review was largely a self-evaluation exercise carried out by subject leaders. Arguably, the evolutionary way in which the annual review has developed reflects the increased competencies of subject leaders, thereby enabling distributed practices to develop. It is a matter of conjecture whether the progress of subject leaders would have occurred without the competency-building programme put in place.

The determination of leadership boundaries

A second issue I wish to explore is the answer to the question: how is leadership distributed? The answer appears to me to revolve around the determination of leadership boundaries and degrees of autonomy within defined areas of responsibility.

In the reorganisation of the case study school in 1999, a number of leadership posts were developed. These included, amongst others, heads of division, subject leaders, pastoral manager and curriculum manager. Attached to each leadership post were specific areas of responsibility and job descriptions. The various job descriptions and responsibilities served to define the specific leadership areas. In some cases, areas

overlapped, whereas in others there was autonomy. For example, heads of division had responsibility for form tutors within a division, who themselves formed part of the defined areas of subject leaders. Subject teachers could be enclosed by a number of leadership boundaries dependent on the areas of the school they were involved with. In addition, as far as was practical, staff appointed to specific leadership roles had demonstrated the necessary competences to match the needs of the role. To a large extent, competency levels played a significant part in determining where to locate distributed leadership practices and the boundaries within which they operated.

The location of distributed leadership and the boundaries within which it operates has important implications for transforming leadership practices. Previously, I have made the case that transforming leadership processes are flexible and responsive to the context in which they operate. Further, I have suggested that as the end-points of a school change the leadership style exercised in it also evolves and develops. The changing styles of leadership I exercised during a period of sustained growth and progression in the case study school has been discussed in Chapter 5. In response to increased competency levels, opportunities became available to develop distributed leadership and the devolution of the decision-making process. In response to the changing needs and aspirations of the school a form of controlled, or limited, distributed leadership emerged. The parameters within which the evolving distributed leadership operated were dependent on a number of factors. Amongst others, the factors included: competency, purpose, power, authority, influence and changing needs.

The relationship between competency and capacity to lead and manage change has already been referred to earlier in this chapter. Distributed leadership can be task

orientated, having a specific remit and purpose. For example, in the case study school the position of numeracy coordinator would fall into this category. Some forms of distributed leadership reflect the changing needs of the school. For example, as the school expanded there was a need to introduce Heads of Year positions. Although some of the responsibilities of the Heads of Year were task orientated, there was the broader brief of leading a particular section of the school. Heads of Year required greater leadership skills and competencies than those of the numeracy coordinator. Whilst both are examples of distributed leadership, they have different boundaries and areas of influence and degrees of delegated power and authority. In addition, some forms of distributed leadership operated for limited periods of time. The chair of a working party would be an example of this type of distributed leadership. Once a working party has concluded its work, the group would be disbanded. In the case study school, this form of distributed leadership has been used for policy formulation and monitoring exercises.

The transforming leader defines the boundaries of leadership in the school, enabling both shared and distributed leadership practices to be developed and regulated. The contraction or expansion of distributive practices is determined in the context of organisational needs, staff competencies or through rationalisation of the organisation. They can be specifically located both in time and space and therefore are agents for contingent leadership; they can be negotiated and adjusted to accommodate staff needs in return for desired outcomes, thereby facilitating exchange or transactional leadership processes; they can be expanded to reflect increased knowledge, skills and competencies providing a linkage with instructional leadership and professional development; they can be expanded to reflect the level of commitment to the

organisation, commensurate with aspects of moral, spiritual and transformational leadership or be restricted to facilitate changing contextual situations or for controlling micro-political factions within the school.

Like transforming leadership, distributed leadership is fluid and dynamic that can be adjusted to meet the needs of the school. Arguably, distributed leadership is an outcome and an example of effective transforming leadership in practice.

Discussion

The emerging theme from this research suggests that whilst normative theoretical leadership constructs offer a useful means of analysing past actions, they are not functionally predictive or an effective constructive planning instrument in the absence of a detailed understanding of a schools' changing social and cultural context. Whilst transformational leadership constructs provide a useful framework for analysis of leadership in practice they do not form the bases for action planning. Whereas, transforming leadership, which I have introduced as a result of this research, offers a planning tool for leadership in practice. Transforming leadership is uniquely located and defined within the school in which it operates and is therefore arguably functionally more useful than the transformational leadership construct. Especially since transformational leadership is a generalised leadership theory that does not take into account the varying social and cultural contexts of schools. Transforming leadership model is both a theory for leadership practice in that it provides a basis for action, and a theory of leadership practice in that it provides a basis for understanding and analysis.

The crucial dimensions of transforming leadership emerging from this research, which distinguish transforming leadership from theoretical transformational leadership constructs, is that the distribution of leadership power, authority and influence occurs during transformation cycles as competency develops and vision changes. Transformational leadership proposes that it fundamentally aims to foster capacity development and higher levels of personal commitment to organisational goals; the spiritual dimension of transformational leadership. The processes by which this occurs is not made clear within the transformational leadership construct. Although it highlights vision, charisma, leadership influence and intellectual stimulation as key elements. Whereas transforming leadership draws on the various leadership models articulated through transformational leadership constructs to describe leadership in practice. Transforming leadership describes the practical processes needed to bring about change and improvement; whereas transformational leadership does not.

Transforming leadership does not operate independently of organisational constructs or the socio-political setting of the community, but is the result of evolving and dynamic interactions that whilst balancing the variable needs of stakeholders, has as its central focus school improvement and effectiveness. Transforming leadership in action is less concerned with theoretical perspectives and more concerned with understanding the complex array of interactions and often competing priorities in schools and the management of these in order to bring about change. It is concerned with the formulation of strategies and action plans that enable the achievement of desired outcomes; being the product of a composite range of leadership styles that fluctuate over time to accommodate the changing circumstances of the environment and the members of the organisation. Transforming leadership is fluid and dynamic, responsive to the changing social and cultural contexts.

The key dimensions of transforming leadership emerging from this research are transformational cycles, competency deficit, the critical mass dynamic, capacity building and distributive leadership. The recurring themes underpinning transforming leadership are competency and capacity development, and the changing vision of the school and the redefining the boundaries of power, authority and influence.

I have made the case for transformational cycles in order to facilitate the changing aspirations of the school and have shown how the cycles relate to competency and capacity development. Crucially the style of leadership exercised within each transformational cycle reflecting changing contexts, aspirations and needs. Effective transforming leadership leads to increased capacity and competence thereby enabling distributed leadership development. The implementation of effective leadership training at all levels in the school that focused on leadership qualities, monitoring and evaluation and the prime task of teaching and learning, enabled a consistent understanding of the vision of the school and the linkage between teacher performance and pupil outcomes. Transforming practices are unlikely to become embedded within an organisation in the absence of relevant staff competencies and the development of shared and distributed leadership roles.

I have demonstrated that the case study school was continually evolving through developing higher levels of expectation, new visions and staff competencies. Continuous school improvement is congruent with effective learning cultures, where teachers are encouraged to reflect on practice, develop collaborative practices, belong to teams and through distributed leadership practices are empowered and committed to the vision of the school. Strategic planning identifies the areas of practice that need to

change or be improved. It gives the overarching rationale and describes the connections between desired outcomes and the implementation of practice; it outlines the various routes that can be taken to achieve specific goals.

The rationale underpinning the methodological approach used in this research was informed by my own experience of leadership. My personal experiences suggest that leadership is an outcome of specific contexts and organisational setting which cannot be fully described through a nomothetic methodology since an empiricist methodological approach is unable to reflect the unique, and culturally dependent, leadership practices. The rationale however, does not preclude being able to use theories of leadership developed from the epistemological tradition of empirical leadership research. Indeed, it offers the opportunity to analyse and understand the leadership practices evidenced through the ideographic methodology used in this case study.

As a result of this case study I have proposed a transforming leadership model that reflects the dynamic context of educational leadership. The transforming leadership model, whilst drawing on traditional empirical epistemology leadership research for analysis and understanding, provides both a theory for leadership practice and a theory of leadership practice. Unlike transformational leadership theory, the transforming leadership model is both a basis for action and for understanding and analysis. The transforming leadership model is uniquely located in the organisation it is describing, able to take cognisance of the contextual constraints of the organisation or school. There is a strong case for arguing that transforming leadership model addresses the constraints of empirical epistemology whilst providing educational leaders with a framework on which to base leadership actions that are context dependent and needs driven. Although it would be idealistic and unrealistic to

assume a template for transforming leadership can be theorised or constructed that fits all schools or organisations.

Leadership practices that result in transforming a particular school may be ineffective when applied in the unique social and cultural contexts of another school or organisation. However, through examining schools where transforming leadership has occurred, it should be possible to tease out those features of transforming leadership practice that cross contextual boundaries and constraints, to provide key principles that are transferable from one setting to another. The purpose of this research, based on a detailed analysis of a case study school where transforming leadership is evidenced, has been to provide some of the key transferable principles for adaptation or adoption in other school contextual settings.

Ten Key Principles for Effective Transforming Leadership Practice

Following this research, and having been in the teaching profession 34 years and a headteacher for seven of these, I am allowing myself the luxury of setting out ten key principles for effective transforming leadership in practice. The key principles are not exhaustive or definitive and further research in a range of educational establishments would be needed to clarify and test the principles identified. Rather, they are a distillation from my own experience as a teacher, and latterly, a headteacher.

1. Central to school transformation is a clearly articulated vision that indicates future possibilities and opportunities. The absence of an overarching vision leaves schools and organisations vulnerable to misdirected leadership that is crisis driven rather than developmental and progressive. However, the vision

should be grounded in the practical reality of the contextual setting and take cognisance of past and present behaviours and achievements. Not only should the vision reflect the aspirations of the teaching staff it must also reflect those of the wider school community, including the pupils, parents and governors. Understanding the cultural setting is a precursor to articulating the vision. Lastly, vision is not static, but dynamic and evolutionary, reflecting the developing and changing contextual setting of schools.

2. Strategic planning is the road map for achieving the vision. It sets out the short, medium and long-term objectives and the means of achieving them and represents the central linkage between vision and day-to-day practice. Through strategic planning, organisational needs are identified, action plans formulated, success criteria established and time scales determined – it forms the bed-rock for all areas of the school and is of central importance for implementing change and servicing progression. The strategic map is the master plan used to convert vision into practice and is underpinned and tested through an effective monitoring and evaluation framework. Like vision, strategic planning is dynamic and evolutionary as the aspirations and expectations of the school change and develop over time.
3. For organisational change, the capacity to accommodate change and competency to deliver change, are essential ingredients serviced through effective targeted instructional programmes and continuing professional development. Capacity and competency continually change as the direction of the school changes, there is no end-point and is characterised by responsiveness to contextual needs and changing demands. Capacity and competency is

commensurate with a learning community and open boundaries that sees skill and knowledge acquisition as a continuous process of learning and application in changing circumstances.

4. Transforming leadership is the product of a range of leadership styles that accommodate changing circumstances and evolving situations that enable the school to achieve its objectives and translate vision into practice. The driving force for change is often, but not always, the positional leader of the school who, through the authority vested in them, is able to nurture and develop multi-layered leadership teams, with specifically designed briefs, through the school. Transformed schools indicate leadership styles are also evolving and being transformed co-jointly with school improvement and development. Transforming leadership is fluid and dynamic, flexible and adaptable.
5. Change invokes intense and sometimes irrational fears and resentment. This is sometimes articulated through resistance to change that can be open or subversive, but nevertheless is a source of intense emotional energy that can be tapped. Treating resistance to change not as a threat, but as a welcome dimension to the change process enables rationalisation of the change process to be articulated and amended as necessary in the light of concerns and issues raised as part of the on-going consultation process. Involving all those likely to be affected by the change process limits the resistance to change and creates a more trusting environment where the views of all are taken seriously and often acted on. It reduces the need for secretiveness and deceit.
6. Teachers will support change when they recognise change is needed. Raising teacher's awareness of the need for change can be achieved through action

research programmes, linked with continuing professional development activities, and enhanced opportunities for outputs from action research to determine school policy and procedures. Reflective practices are essential if staff are to learn from what has taken place before and for planning for the future. Having ownership of research methods empowers staff and enables trust, collaboration and a learning community to be established.

7. Transforming schools is more than transforming the internal culture of the school it embodies all stakeholders in the school and the local community. Involvement in and with the local community ensures that the vision of the school together with its aspirations and goals are articulated to a wider audience. Parents form an essential part of the transformational equation and should be actively involved by the school in policy formulation and day-to-day practices.
8. Schools are complex organisations reflecting the many and varied social constructs in the world about us. Effective transforming leadership is concerned with giving new dimensions and understanding to the social construct through interpersonal and relational leadership practices. It is concerned with understanding the driving forces and motives of people in school and harnessing the latent energy and expertise to produce change and improvement in performance. It is charismatic and motivational but backed through pragmatic realism, distanced from rhetorical promises and expectations. It puts a high premium on interpersonal relationships and places integrity at the heart of communications.

9. A consistently applied value system creates trust in the organisation even where there are differences in opinion and the direction in which the school is moving. A transforming leader is a moral agent, setting the ground rules for social and professional interactions, and behavioural expectations underpinned by a strong moral framework and a consistently applied system of values and beliefs. It is through a consistently applied moral and ethical framework that trust can be engendered and principles of engagement established, providing a structure within which the changing nature of transforming leadership practices and processes can operate effectively.
10. Transforming leadership is about taking risks, making mistakes and preparing others to take on the mantle of leadership.

Further areas of research

This research has probably generated as many questions as answers concerning the role of the positional leader in a school and in particular the nature of transforming leadership. Some of the questions that perhaps warrant further research are:

1. How does action research affect teaching and learning and pupil outcomes?
2. How does the Critical Mass Dynamic affect school performance? How can the critical mass dynamic be measured?
3. How do you build capacity for change and what is its impact on organisational performance?
4. How long does a transformational cycle last and what is its relationship to pupil outcomes and school performance?

5. Can distributed leadership be used to modify and control staff behaviours and micro-political groups?
6. To what extent does a competency deficit limit school improvement and performance?
7. How does knowledge of pupil data assist with school improvement?
8. Does the inspection framework assist with the transformation of schools?
9. Does the accountability model of headship restrict performance?
10. How do schools recognise leadership potential and develop it?

Concluding comment

Leaders have the potential to transform schools and transformed schools have the potential to improve performance. The mechanism by which this change occurs is not always clear and transparent as it is often clouded by the complex nature of schools and the micro and macro exchanges that takes place in them. The aim of this research has been to analyse school leadership processes during a period of significant change and development with a broader purpose of contributing to the evolving debate on leadership practices and transforming leadership in particular, so that outcomes from it may inform and clarify some of the issues surrounding this important concern in the school improvement agenda.

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Appendix A

Staff questionnaire

Question

Strategic Thinking

- 18** Takes a medium to long-term strategic overview of the development of the school
- 66** Identifies patterns and connections and takes time to reflect on their significance in shaping vision and direction
- 104** Imaginatively applies models of best practice from outside the school to the school
- 12** Cuts through complexity by creating models that help others understand where they are going, and relate their part of the action to the whole
- 99** Communicates the big picture to others
- 32** Thinks 'outside the box' especially to anticipate and plan future developments
- 96** Experiments with a range of methods and processes to produce the best results
- 97** Reshapes ideas and concepts, taking a strategic approach to identify an innovative way forward for the school

Impact and Influence

- 71** Uses a range of strategies and steps to persuade others
- 57** When appropriate, does something unexpected or vivid to make people sit up and take notice
- 79** Tailors an approach to win over or influence an individual or group
- 75** Influences behind the scenes, using third parties (e.g. parents, other teachers, advisers) to influence others and build support
- 56** Uses deliberate and systematic influence over an extended period to secure others' support

Drive for improvement

- 25** Takes effective action to achieve measurable improvements in teaching and learning

- 6 Measures and tracks own and others' performance against specific objectives and targets
- 80 Relentlessly drives through obstacles and setbacks to achieve success
- 106 Sets and works to meet challenging goals which represent real stretch
- 63 Weighs the pros and cons of different courses of action, then focuses effort and resources on the course of action that will result in maximum performance and learning outcomes
- 62 Takes carefully calculated risks to bring about improvement in performance and learning outcomes

Personal Conviction

- 14 Confidently gives an independent view
- 70 Acts on his personal beliefs
- 61 Sees and presents self as a professional
- 95 Speaks and acts from the heart as well as from the head
- 50 Actions are underpinned through a strong moral framework and reflected in his expectations of others
- 92 Actions are consistent with own stated values, even when it is difficult to carry out
- 23 Takes on challenges and deals with situations that others back away from (including challenging powerful stakeholders where necessary)
- 40 Has faith in the inherent value of what he does
- 89 Is motivated by challenge: the tougher the better

Transformational Leadership

- 81 Establishes clear targets and school goals
- 87 Creates professional development opportunities to enable school objectives to be achieved
- 5 Speaks positively about the school and promotes its image to others
- 41 Develops structures for fostering participation in school decisions
- 82 Models best practice and important organizational values

- 34 Sets a personal example of how he wants others to act and demonstrates high expectations
- 72 Takes personal responsibility for ensuring that the school or team meets their objectives
- 16 Provides intellectual stimulus and fosters a productive and learning culture
- 103 Communicates a compelling vision of what is to be achieved and inspires others to achieve it

Holding People Accountable

- 2 Contracts for performance or for adherence to a principle, policy or change
- 46 Says clearly what behaviour and what standards of work are expected
- 78 Sets clear limits and boundaries for behaviour and what can and cannot be done, in order to support teaching and learning and get the job done
- 43 Reviews progress against clear expectations and standards
- 47 Holds others accountable for doing what they agreed to do, and for performing to the required standard
- 83 Publicly follows up if there is a deviation from the agreed goals
- 33 Directly confronts poor performance and underachievement
- 35 Takes decisive and timely action to correct short-falls in performance

Initiative

- 29 Is decisive and strategic
- 102 Defuses potential problems before they escalate
- 22 Thinks and acts ahead of time, to seize an opportunity or to sort out a problem
- 28 Anticipates and prepares for possible problems or opportunities that are not obvious to others
- 65 Takes action to create an opportunity to avoid a future problem

- 55** Anticipates situations a long way off and acts to create opportunities or avoid problems that are not obvious to others

Information Seeking

- 49** Asks questions of those closest to the action to get a first-hand understanding of what is going on, and of people's thoughts and opinions
- 90** Keeps an ear to the ground in relation to all aspects of the school's activities both in a community and authority context
- 10** Gets to the root of things by asking incisive questions
- 19** Goes beyond the obvious questions to probe significant detail
- 51** Does detailed research to gather information about a particular topic
- 100** Gathers information from a wide range of sources
- 3** Develops and regularly uses contacts and networks to keep abreast of professional best practice and initiatives
- 45** Develops and uses systems or processes which provide good information about the school and the wider environment

Analytical Thinking

- 24** Breaks down tasks or problems into key parts (e.g. makes lists of actions required and resources needed)
- 101** Breaks down programmes of work so that they are digestible, and identifies key targets to be achieved
- 9** Thinks ahead to identify possible consequences
- 36** Makes clear, logical plans when structuring programmes of work
- 37** Traces cause and effect in situations
- 13** Analyses several possible causes for any given situation
- 20** Makes extensive use of data to formulate action plans for future improvement
- 98** Tackles apparently intractable, complex or taxing situations by rigorous analysis (including consideration of longer-term effects and impacts, including those on pupils, staff, organisational 'atmosphere' and groups outside the school)

Developing Potential

- 21 Models how to do something well
- 59 Demonstrates how to do something, giving step-by-step guidance
- 7 Provides reasons or other support to help others understand and take action
- 105 Gives specific, balanced feedback (what went well and where there is room for improvement) to enable individuals to assess their progress and target their learning effort
- 109 Gives encouragement to others, especially when there are difficulties
- 27 Deliberately creates opportunities which will help others develop their potential (e.g. delegating fully having first established others' capability, creating opportunities for others to learn from mistakes in a non-critical setting)

Team working

- 67 Cooperates with and supports colleagues and parents when asked
- 52 Keeps colleagues informed and shares good practice
- 74 Communicates frequently with parents
- 11 Asks colleagues, parents and others for their opinions and their ideas
- 108 Asks for feedback from others on his own work
- 4 Brings issues which hamper effectiveness of the team in to the open and helps the team in overcoming these
- 58 Brings people together and makes them feel proud of being part of the school
- 91 Takes action to promote the school (e.g. speaks positively about the school and its achievements to others, protects the school)

Understanding Others

- 38 Works out how others are feeling by observing their non-verbal behaviour
- 15 Works out the meaning of what others are doing when they are giving 'mixed messages' - saying one thing but doing another

- 94 Understands the significance of the behaviour of pupils and others even when this is not overtly expressed
- 26 Demonstrates objectivity in assessing others' strengths and weaknesses
- 107 Makes sense of the reasons for someone's ongoing patterns of behaviour
- 64 Understands the interactions within and between groups and appreciates the reasons for group behaviour, even when these are not obvious

Understanding the Environment

- 1 Understands and uses formal and informal processes to get things done in the school or community, or in relation to other organisations
- 48 Identifies and understands the different agendas of the various micro-political groups in the school
- 17 Understands the way things are and how things get done
- 86 Is alert to clues about shifts in team 'climate' and knows what action is appropriate
- 88 Knows what is and is not possible to do in the school and the community
- 69 Understands the different interest groups and coalitions in the school, community and other bodies, and uses this to achieve strategic objectives
- 77 Understands the reasons for ongoing patterns of behaviour or social attitudes, and the social, cultural and other influences that have shaped the school and its community in the past

Challenge and Support

- 60 Puts in place robust steps to ensure the physical and psychological safety of pupils in his care
- 93 Acts to ensure the practical well-being of pupils in his care
- 76 Uses a number of ways to build pupils' self-esteem (e.g. praises achievements, successes, and/or positive patterns of behaviour)

- 110 Makes progress visible to the pupils and others
- 30 Acts relentlessly in the interests of all pupils to secure the best possible provision
- 54 Persists in working for the best possible educational outcomes for all pupils, even when the going gets tough
- 31 Is prepared to be appropriately stern in the best interests of the pupil
- 44 Takes strong action to produce changes in practice (including robustly challenging pupils, others, or institutions)

Respect for Others

- 39 Is attentive to the unique qualities of each individual
- 68 Actively listens to pupils and others (I.e. hears what they say, shows interest, acknowledges and validates their points of view and contributions)
- 73 Respects and values diversity
- 84 Behaves in a way that shows pupils or others that they are valued as individuals, and for what they can contribute
- 8 Maintains high expectations of others against the odds
- 85 Acts in a way that shows pupils or others that they are still valued, even when they have done something unacceptable
- 42 Consistently and publicly praises achievements of pupils who have achieved against the odds
- 53 Takes a number of steps over time to create a feeling of community within and beyond the school community (e.g. encourage individuals to value each other when there are differences of view and background)

Appendix B

Documentation generated within the case study school but not in the public domain

Action Learning Group minutes 1997

Bill's Briefs 1999

Governor's Bulletin 2001 - 2002

Job descriptions – Subject Leaders, Deputy Head, Head of Year, Subject Teacher

Minutes of Governing Body Curriculum Committee 1997

Minutes of Governing Body meetings 1991 – 2005

School Assemblies 1998 – 2005

School Development Plan 1998 – 2001 and 2002 – 2005 current headteacher

School Development Plan 1998 – 2001 previous headteacher

School Newsletters, Volumes 1 – 6, 1998 – 2005

School Policies covering period 1994 - 2005

School Prize Giving Speeches 1998 – 2005, current headteacher

School Prospectus 1997 (previous headteacher) to 2005 (current headteacher)

Staff Manual 1997, previous headteacher

Staff Manual 1998, current headteacher

Staff Meeting minutes 1998 – 2005

Staff Training Sessions minutes and notes 1998 – 2005

Subject Department minutes 1991 – 2005

Subject Leader Training Manual 2000

Subject Reviews 1999 – 2005

Teaching and Learning Policy 1998

Teaching Research Scholarship 2002 final report

Tracking Data Base, 1999 - 2005

Appendix C

Documentation generated from outside the case study school but not in the public domain

ACCAC Most Improved Award letters 1999, 2001 and 2005

Annual Performance Reviews, ESIS advisory service, 1999 – 2005, Pontypridd

Audit Reports 1991 – 2004

Fischer Family Trust analysis at KS3 and 4 for 1999 – 2005

Headteacher Performance Management Reviews 2002 to 2006

MidYIS Value Added Measures to KS3 and 4 for 2003, 2004 and 2005

RE2 Forms, Summary Reports of achievements of pupils aged 15 1998 - 2005, GCSE, ELQ (1) and Equivalent Achievements, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff.

Various letters, 1991 - 2005